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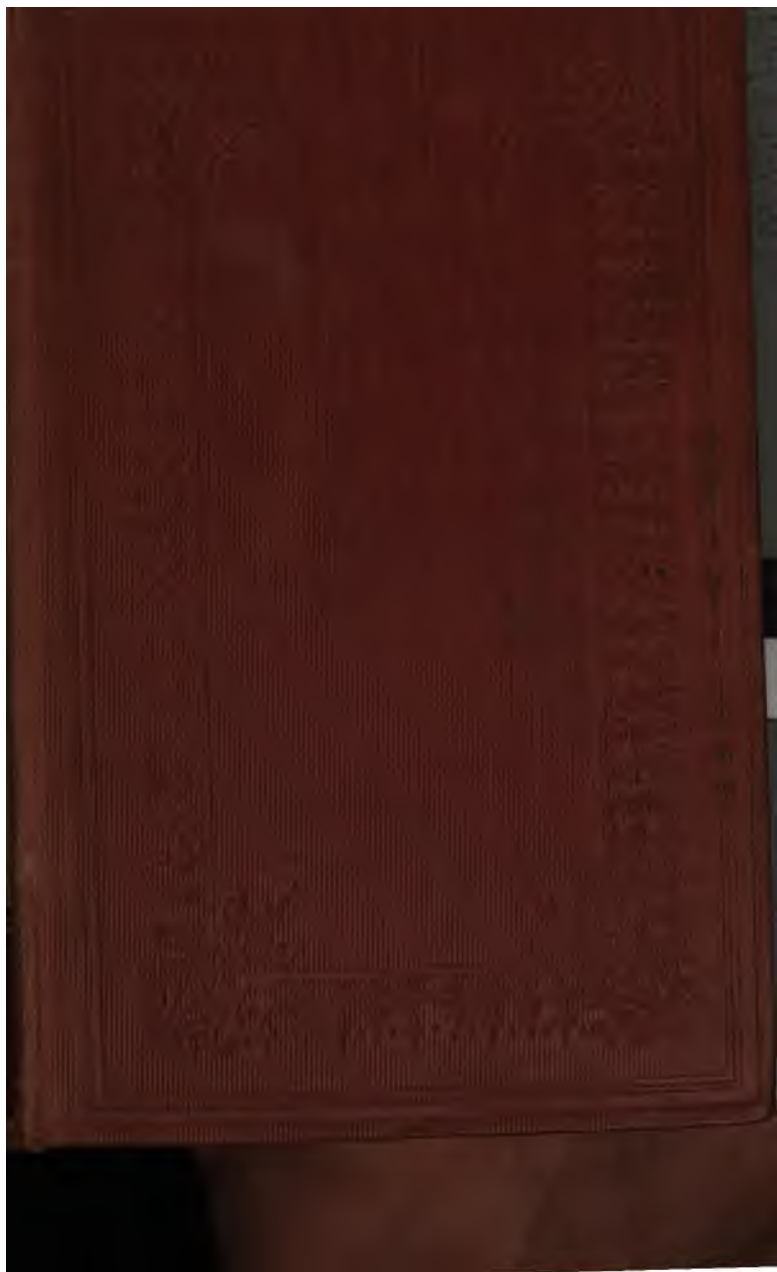
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**A CHILD'S
HISTORY OF THE WORLD.**

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A CHILD'S
HISTORY OF THE WORLD.

LONDON:
SPOTTISWOODES and SHAW,
New-street-Square.

**A CHILD'S
HISTORY OF THE WORLD ;**

OR,

GLIMPSES OF THE WORLD'S HISTORY,

IN FAMILIAR LETTERS

WRITTEN

**FOR THE INSTRUCTION AND AMUSEMENT OF
A CHILD.**

BY

MRS. PERCY SINNETT.



**LONDON:
LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN, AND LONGMANS.
1853.**

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1. The first part of the paper is devoted to a discussion of the general principles of the theory of the structure of the human mind. It is shown that the mind is a complex system of interacting elements, and that the structure of the mind is determined by the nature of these interactions.

2. The second part of the paper is devoted to a discussion of the specific features of the structure of the human mind. It is shown that the mind is a complex system of interacting elements, and that the structure of the mind is determined by the nature of these interactions. The specific features of the structure of the human mind are discussed in detail.

3. The third part of the paper is devoted to a discussion of the methods of studying the structure of the human mind. It is shown that the mind is a complex system of interacting elements, and that the structure of the mind is determined by the nature of these interactions. The methods of studying the structure of the human mind are discussed in detail.

4. The fourth part of the paper is devoted to a discussion of the applications of the theory of the structure of the human mind. It is shown that the mind is a complex system of interacting elements, and that the structure of the mind is determined by the nature of these interactions. The applications of the theory of the structure of the human mind are discussed in detail.

5. The fifth part of the paper is devoted to a discussion of the conclusions of the theory of the structure of the human mind. It is shown that the mind is a complex system of interacting elements, and that the structure of the mind is determined by the nature of these interactions. The conclusions of the theory of the structure of the human mind are discussed in detail.

P R E F A C E.

I WAS first induced to undertake the following little work from having looked in vain for something of the kind for my own children. Several excellent special histories—particularly Histories of England—have been already written for children; but, as far as I am aware, none that might serve to show, in an intelligible and, as far as possible, an interesting manner, the relation which the history of each country bears to that of others, and its place in the grand panorama of the

world, — to serve, in short, much the same purpose that a small globe serves in geography.

In order to avoid what, in this case, would be the “great evil of a great book,” I have, of course, been obliged to content myself with a very general and rapid sketch of the most important events ; but I have endeavoured to give the outline correctly, so that, however much it may afterwards, on more mature study, require filling up, it will, I hope, in no particular, need to be effaced.

Of the history of England I have, for the reason above stated, only said as much as was necessary to connect it with that of other countries ; and, in order to avoid too much explanation, I have assumed some slight acquaintance with physical geography, as well as a cer-

tain amount of thoughtful intelligence which is certainly not uncommon, though perhaps not universal, among children. Where it is absent, I do not think it can answer any useful purpose to attempt to communicate historical knowledge; but, provided the manner be sufficiently simple, I believe they are often capable of taking an interest in matters that might be supposed beyond their range. As far as appeared consistent with the comprehension of juvenile readers, I have endeavoured to point their attention rather to the great events that have marked the progress of civilisation, than to the successions of dynasties, the private concerns of royal families, or trivial anecdotes, which are not always valuable because they are told of real persons. I have also supplied small Chronolo-

gical Tables for reference, in order to show more clearly the connection of the whole, as far as I have gone; but as the history of recent times is too complicated, and involves the consideration of subjects of too great difficulty to be included in so slight and cursory glance, or made properly intelligible to so early an age, I have thought it better for the present not to enter upon it.

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A
CHILD'S
HISTORY OF THE WORLD.

LETTER I.

MY DEAR CHILD,

I AM afraid you felt rather alarmed, when I told you that the subject on which I intended to write some letters to you was the History of the World. You have been accustomed, like most children, to associate with that name notions of very dull books, difficult to understand, and quite uninteresting to you.

But history, you know, means the

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account of everything that has really happened; and as usually when you hear any story the first question you ask is, "Is it true?" which is the same as if you asked, "Is it history?" I am sure you would not think anything you heard uninteresting merely because it had really happened; but, on the contrary, you would think it much more interesting for that very reason.

Of course a very small part indeed of the things that happen in the world ever have been, or ever could be, written down. All the history-writers that have ever lived could not have written down all that happens in the world for one single day, so that every one who attempts to write history must choose out of the great heap of facts what he thinks most worth telling. Once people used to think there was nothing worth telling but about kings and battles, so that for many hundreds of years scarcely anything else was

written; and it has only been by very carefully examining the buildings, and whatever else was left from those times, that we have been able to make out what sort of people lived then, or how they used to pass their time.

It is our knowledge of history, almost more than anything else, that makes our condition so much better than that of the lower animals. It is by knowing what has been done by the people who have lived before us in the world, and having the advantage of their experience, that we are enabled to go on improving ourselves and the world around us more and more.

Our cat knows no more than the one that went with Noah into the ark, because it and all the cats that have lived since, even if they have ever made any clever observations, have not been able to tell them, or write any account of them, so that the cats of the present time are *none the better* for what they

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may have known. There are no human beings, not even the stupidest and rudest savages, who have not some sort of history or tradition, as we call it; that is to say, history not written. They all know what their fathers and mothers were in the habit of doing; and many have heard their parents tell what their fathers and grandfathers did before them. This tradition — that is to say, the account of events preserved by telling from one to another — is always the first kind of history, and it is better to have this than none at all. But stories get so much altered when they are often repeated, so many things are forgotten, and very often so many things put in by each story-teller, that we can seldom feel very sure of the truth of what we know only by tradition. This is the reason why there is so much uncertainty in the earliest history of all nations. The accounts of the first events

have never been written down till many hundreds of years after they took place, and so there are mostly a great many mistakes in these accounts. In many cases, too, before any kind of written record was made, there were poets who not only put all they had heard into verses and songs, but also a great deal that they knew was not true, but which they put in to make the songs prettier and amuse people. These were of course pleasanter, and easier to remember and repeat, than mere prose narratives, so people neglected these, and preserved only the poems; and, at last, it became very difficult to tell what was true and what was put in only for amusement.

There are a great many uses of history that I shall not speak of now, because you will understand them better as you grow older; but there is one especially that I wish to point out to you. When people are ignorant of

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history, and have always had their attention confined to what was passing around themselves, they are apt to think that many wonderful things that have happened in distant times and countries are not true, merely because they are not like what they see every day. But history, which shows us nations of men living in states as entirely different almost as if they were inhabitants of another world, helps to cure us of this foolish and unreasonable habit of disbelieving things only because they are surprising.

In my next letter I shall tell you something about the first people who lived on the earth, and the place where it is most likely they were put.

LETTER II.

THERE is some difficulty in making out quite exactly the spot of the whole earth first inhabited by human beings; but there is no doubt that it was somewhere between the countries lying eastward, beyond the rivers Euphrates and Tigris and the north-west of India. Sheltered from the coldest winds by grand and lofty mountains, there lie near the Affghan state of Cabool ranges of hills and valleys of great beauty, one of which is called by Asiatics, the Garden of Eternal Spring. Nearly all the most useful plants, and the animals most valuable to man, appear to have been originally natives of this part of the world; and all history and all tradition, the account given in the Bible,

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as well as by Indians and Chinese, and all the discoveries that have been made concerning the most ancient nations, all serve to show that hereabouts the first home of the human race was situated.

I wish I could tell you more exactly where it was, but it is better to confess our ignorance than to pretend to know what we do not.

If you were asked to give an account of the beginning of your life, you would be very much puzzled; indeed, you could not do it at all; you do not recollect any beginning, nor does any one. When we look back to the earliest time we can remember, we seem to see here and there some person, or some circumstance appearing, as if out of a cloud, and then disappearing again, and then will come a long time which we can recollect nothing at all of; and just like this is the beginning of human history; of the life of the whole human

race. The first books of the Bible give us some of these glimpses, or peeps, as you might call them, at the earliest inhabitants of the earth, just two or three families, and then they tell us nothing more for a long, long time. The clouds roll over again, and go sweeping on for hundreds and hundreds of years in solemn silence, and when at last they sweep away, we find that those few families of the earth have become nations, and have made a progress that they could not well have made in less than two thousand years. It was about this time that Abraham lived. I say *about*, because much more learned people than we are, cannot pretend to be quite exact as to the date of what happened so very, very long ago. At this time, the few families mentioned in the Bible seem, as I have said, to have increased to vast numbers and to have spread in all directions, and at that period *begins* what we may consider as

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history; but it is still very uncertain. Assyria and Egypt and India and perhaps China, were in the time of Abraham what we may call civilised countries; but all the world, except these countries, was new and wild and untouched by man. What a strange world it must have been in those days! What we now call England, and France, and Germany, nothing but vast, silent forests, with no inhabitants but huge wild beasts! Even the places that lay nearer to what were then the civilised parts of the earth, such as Greece and Turkey, with no towns or houses, and only a few wild people wandering about them!

In those days there were not only no steam boats, no railroads, and no newspapers, but no roads at all, and no letters. People who went out from the few civilised countries roamed over vast regions, unpeopled except by beasts, and keeping up no communication with

those they had left, must have soon become very much like savages.

We see something like the same thing happen even now with people who go to new countries.

The very earliest migrations or movements most likely took place before what may be called nations existed at all. One or two families, or small tribes, perhaps, wandered to a short distance in search of a pleasanter abode, or a better hunting ground. Their children would move a little further, "the world was all before them," and so, little by little, most of the whole great surface of the globe became more or less inhabited by people moving on slowly but incessantly in every direction. We see the same process going on still in such parts of the world as have unoccupied spaces.

Sometimes when people came to the shores of the ocean they turned back again, and met other tribes who had

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quitted the civilised parts of the world at a later time. Thus the earliest inhabitants of Italy, the Etruscans, were said to have come from Spain, and so I dare say they did, but their forefathers had gone to Spain first, most likely across France. When they came to Italy they met colonies, or companies of emigrants coming from Greece and Troy, and neither of them suspected that they, or at least their ancestors, had come at first from the same place.

LETTER III.

BETWEEN the countries now called Persia and Arabia (which you can easily find on the map) are two great rivers, the names of which are, as I believe they always have been, the Euphrates and the Tigris. They flow, at no great distance from each other, through wide beautiful plains, once more fertile than England is now, and fall at last into the sea called the Gulf of Persia. Here lived one of the first civilised nations on the earth — most likely the very first.

A civilised country is one where the people know a great many things, and where they live according to certain rules or laws that they think it right to obey, and where they get their living by *peaceable* occupations, each one

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giving up a part of his own will in doing merely what he likes for the moment, in order to do what he knows is best for himself and others. Whenever you persist in doing anything only because you choose to do it at the moment, without considering whether it is right or wrong, reasonable or unreasonable, you are not like a civilised person, but much more like a savage, or a wild animal.

Well, as I have said, the country between and around the two great rivers Euphrates and Tigris was once a civilised country, and a very rich and powerful one.

For miles and miles along the shores of these rivers, and far around, where now is only silent desert and heaps of sand, and here and there a little miserable village, there lie, buried beneath the ground, the remains of the great cities, and palaces, and temples of what was once the Assyrian empire.

As there is no stone in that country,

the houses were mostly built of bricks, as London is; and as these do not last so long as stones, that is one reason why these great towns, where hundreds of thousands of people once lived, have so entirely gone to ruin and disappeared. We have no reason to think they were much older than the oldest buildings of Egypt, yet they had so completely vanished, that some people thought there must be some mistake about it, and that these lonely hills and plains could not be the very places where they had stood.

It was said that the Greek writer Herodotus, who has told us so much about Egypt, had written a history of Assyria too, but there was not a bit of it left; and though some pieces of one that had been written long after by somebody else were found, they were so full of foolish stories that people did not know what to make of them. All that was known about Assyria until

lately, was from its being now and then mentioned in the Bible.

But a few years ago some English gentlemen began to take particular notice of some strange-looking hills that lay near the great river Tigris, and one of them * dug up near these hills a few curious-looking bricks and stones, with something like letters on them, which he thought, for many reasons, must have been made by these ancient Assyrians; and he sent them to the British Museum, where they were put into a box about a yard long: and that, as far as we knew, was all that was left of the great Assyrian empire. But the curiosity of many people was excited to know whether anything more could be found; and, in the year 1840, two other English gentlemen † set off to ramble alone about those strange countries, and see if they could find out anything.

* Mr. Rich.

† Mr. Layard and his companion.

They had at first to pass the nights in the wild jungle, on the banks of the river; and a Turkish servant, whom they had with them, got frightened and went home. They staid there a good while, however, and the few poor people of the country, whom they occasionally met, treated them kindly, but could tell them nothing about what they wanted to know. After a time, however, — I must not stop to tell you how, for it would take me too long, — these gentlemen began to make wonderful discoveries. They found that the hills or mounds that had been supposed to be mere earth were really the remains of vast buildings that had been laid in ruins, or perhaps burnt; and then in the course of more than a thousand years had got covered with earth and grass; sometimes even villages had been built upon them. Mr. Layard then got a great number of men, and *set them digging*, and they found be-

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neath the earth what had been the palace of the old Assyrian kings mentioned in the Bible, and great blocks of alabaster, with figures of men and animals sculptured upon them, and remains of what had once been paintings in gorgeous colours, on the walls of the rooms, representing grand ceremonies, as we might have a picture of the coronation of Queen Victoria. On the floors there have been inscriptions telling the names of the kings, and their achievements; and on the ceilings paintings of flowers and animals, inlaid with ivory and gilding. Many of the stone sculptures they dug out have been, with great labour and expense, brought to England, and we may see them any day in the British Museum; but as yet only a small part of these wonderful hills have been dug into, so that we shall most likely hear some day that many more discoveries have been made. We have already found enough to make us sure that

this was the city of Nineveh, — the first city, we have every reason to think, that was ever built upon the earth. We should be very glad if we could find, as well as the palaces of the kings, the houses of some of the private and poor people; but these of course were built of slighter materials, and they have all gone to dust, so that we have scarcely any means of knowing what the habits and occupations of the people were. We find from things mentioned in the Bible that they were very fond of public entertainments and grand festivities. We hear of the princes and nobles feasting for a hundred and twenty days together, and being served in vessels of gold, and drinking great quantities of wine, so that often they were all tipsy. Now if the kings and nobles lived in this wasteful riotous way, it is most likely there must have been a great many poor people.

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 of : they understood, too, the art of
 working in ivory, and it is supposed
 also of making glass, for small bottles
 and elegantly shaped vases of glass have
 been found among the ruins. Now as
 there were so many people engaged in
 trades and arts, and as there was a
 king and nobles living in splendour and
 doing nothing, unless, perhaps, making
 war, which is generally worse than no-
 thing, there must have been great
 numbers of people employed in raising
 food for them, in cultivating the ground

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lous, rich, and industrious nation.

There is, however, one other way by which we may find out something about them. They fortunately understood how to write, not exactly as we do, nor I believe on quite so good a plan, but still what would serve some purpose. They did not write books, but they used to cut letters on stones and rocks, and on the floors and walls of buildings. They also wrote on bricks before they were baked, and while the clay was still soft; the baking afterwards not altering the letters, but only making them hard and durable.

By examining these various inscrip-

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tions on rocks and stones we have made out something of what the religion of the Assyrians was; that they worshipped the stars, not knowing that they were only wonderful works of God, but taking them for so many gods themselves. This was of course a great mistake; but seeing them so bright, so beautiful, so far off, and quite out of human reach, so unchanging through all times that men can reckon, it is not surprising that they should have made such a mistake. Those same stars that the Assyrian shepherds saw in their cloudless sky, as they sat by their flocks at night, we may see this evening, looking just as they did then.

As the Assyrians took the stars for gods, of course they thought there was not one only, but a great number of gods; and then, afterwards, they began to make figures to represent their notions of what these gods were *like*. They thought, perhaps, the gods

are intelligent as men are, and very strong. Now the lion and the bull were the strongest beasts they knew of, so they made figures of the lion and the bull to represent the strength, and put human heads to them to represent the intelligence. Then they said the gods can see farther than men can: now the eagle is the creature that can see farthest; and then they made the figure of a man with the head of an eagle, and so on with a great number of symbolical figures, as we call them, that is, figures, put to represent our own thoughts, and not any actual thing that we have seen.

I shall have something more to say about these symbolical figures when we come to speak of Egypt.

Of the history of Assyria at this very earliest period we know nothing more than the names of some kings, and even these are not very certain. The two *most frequently* mentioned are those

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of Ninus and his wife Semiramis, who is said to have been a great warrior as well as her husband, and to have led armies to fight with the kings of India. Now whether she was really the person who led them or not, does not much matter; but some sculptures have been found representing these battles, and they show us that there was such a country as India known at that time, and that it was a civilised country. We know that it was India, because the people are shown bringing elephants, and monkeys, and rhinoceroses to the Assyrians; and these animals were not found in their own country; and we know that it must have been civilised because they are also bringing silk stuffs, shawls, and vessels of gold and silver, which savages of course could not make.

LETTER IV.

It will be worth while, I think, to try and get as good a notion as we can, of what sort of country ancient Egypt was, for probably it was very much like what all the civilised countries in the earliest ages were. It was, as I have already said, a civilised country when our histories begin, and so also were Assyria and India. For how long before we do not know; but we know much more of what Egypt was in the early times, than of either of the other two; for besides immense quantities of buildings and other works left by the old Egyptians, we have accounts of it by several famous history writers, who saw it while it was still a rich and flourishing country, though not so *grand as it had once been.*

When we consider what kind of country it was, it seems likely that the first inhabitants were not mere savages, but must have come from another civilised country (perhaps Assyria); for Egypt could hardly have been inhabited at all, except by people who knew how to manage many things.

It is a long narrow valley, with rocks on each side, and the river Nile flowing through the middle of it. This is a great river containing an immense body of water, that at certain seasons of the year overflows its banks and covers the whole valley, so that it looks like a great lake, out of which villages and houses stick up like little islands.

This inundation covers the ground, which would otherwise be barren red sand and chalk, with rich vegetable soil, that will bring forth in abundance corn and fruit, and everything planted or sown in it; but of course, when the waters first retire, they leave only a

nasty slimy waste, and all the marks that distinguish one person's land from another's are often washed away or buried in mud; and you may easily suppose that a great deal of knowledge as well as a great deal of industry must have been necessary to make such a country like a garden for fertility, and fit to erect great buildings upon.

As, however, it always happens that the more people exert themselves, and try to do difficult things, the cleverer they become, it happened that the very trouble the Egyptians had with their country made them afterwards get on more than the people in the countries they came from, where it was easier to live. They had come first to the southern part, most likely across the narrowest part of the Red Sea, and advanced gradually along the banks of the Nile towards the north; making dams and dykes in *some places* where they did not want

the water to come, and cutting canals for rain in other places where there was not enough, and cultivating the ground till it was all over blooming and beautiful. And then, as there was plenty for everybody to eat, they had time to set about building those grand temples, and pyramids, and monuments, which people still go to gaze at and wonder at even in their ruins. But this, of course, was not for a long time.

It is thought that the Egyptians made their first dwellings in the rocks by the Nile, which are full of caverns. These they hollowed out and smoothed and cut, so as to make them fit to live in. It does not seem unlikely, because there was another ancient people with whom they were very likely acquainted (I shall tell you about them by and bye), who had cut almost a whole city out of the solid rock. *From these rocky dwellings they, per-*

haps, got their first notions of building, and they made their buildings so huge, and grand, and solid, that they look as if they would last for ever, like the rocks themselves.

The Pyramids did not, in the days of Egypt's greatness, stand naked and lonely as they do now, but within the vast enclosures of the temples, which you will suppose must have been very great; for, besides affording room for all the grand shows and ceremonies which were a part of the religion, they contained the palaces of the kings, and the dwellings of the immense numbers of priests, with all their disciples and attendants, and the thousands of workmen of all kinds constantly employed in the decoration and services of the temple. These were not always the same in one temple as another; indeed, every principal temple had not only its own service, but its own gods. There were two—Isis and Osiris, some-

times supposed to have signified the sun and the moon, which were worshipped all over Egypt; but some were only worshipped at certain temples, while at others nobody cared about them. At Memphis there was a certain black bull, and at the city of Heliopolis there was another, said to be his son; both of which were regarded as divinities, and the hippopotamus was worshipped in Lower Egypt, though some miles up the country they hunted him. In a lake called Lake Mœris there were sacred crocodiles, and in other places sacred lions. These animals had separate houses, and were daintily fed on milk and honey, and meat roasted or raw, and on all kinds of nice things: they had warm baths, and were anointed with precious ointments and perfumes, and decorated and waited upon by many servants. An ancient writer named Strabo mentions having seen one of these holy

crocodiles. He was taken by his Egyptian host to the lake where the creature was kept, and the visitors carried with them a cake, and some roast meat, and a bottle of mead, a kind of wine made of honey that you may perhaps have tasted, as it is sometimes made in England. They found the crocodile lying on the shore, with his ears and his forefeet ornamented with rings ; and two of the priests went up to it and opened its jaws, and put in the cakes and the meat, which the crocodile seemed to like ; but then they poured in the bottle of mead, and that I suppose he did not like, for he jumped directly into the lake and swam away to the opposite shore. Presently there came another visitor, who also brought dainties for the crocodile ; and then the priests went round the lake and crammed him again, though by his going away he seemed to say, as plainly as he could, that he had had

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enough. What seems to us most surprising is, that he did not attempt to do them the slightest injury. The bird called the Ibis, one of which you may see in the Zoological Gardens, was considered sacred through all Egypt, and serpents also were regarded with particular veneration. Some people kept them tame in their houses, and they used to come out at a signal, and fetch bits that were offered to them; but some serpents kept in the temples were so sacred that no one was allowed to look at them, not even the priests, who merely placed their food ready and went away directly. One who had broken the rule and stopped to gaze at the creature, it was said, had become mad and died; though if he did, I do not suppose his looking at the serpent had anything to do with it. We find, too, that though the priests were so very respectful, *they used* sometimes to take the liberty

of killing these comical deities. It seems very odd, does it not, that grown people, many of them clever people too, should have done anything so foolish as to kneel down and worship animals so very much inferior to themselves; and we do not know very well what they meant by it, but it may have happened partly in this way:— When they first began to look about them in the world, and to notice how many things in it were wonderful, and quite beyond what they could understand, they knew there must be somewhere some great living Power, knowing more, and able to do more than any man, or than all men put together. They noticed, for instance, that wonder which we see so often that perhaps we think nothing of it, — that a little seed like a grain of dust, which we put into the ground, grows up into a large beautiful plant; and they *did not in the least* understand, nor do

we, how this could be managed. But they saw that the sunshine helped plants to grow, and they said, "The sun is the God that makes the plants, let us worship him:" and they did so, calling him Osiris. They noticed, too, that certain groups of stars, constellations we call them, were to be seen at certain seasons of the year. One they saw most at the time when it was usual to plough the ground, which they did with oxen; and so in that very awkward hieroglyphic or picture writing of theirs, when they meant to say something about this constellation, they used to put down the figure of a bull; and when they had been in the habit of doing this for a long time, they forgot what had been first meant by it, and that it was only a sign or symbol, and mistook the bull for the Divine power itself.

In the same way the serpent, with his tail in his mouth, made a circle,

and that was used to express the circle of the heavens, and so on. A great many more examples might be given of how the people came to confuse together the sign with the thing it signified, till at last they did not know what was meant at all, and would worship anything, even dogs and cats. The dog, however, got into disgrace, because when a great Persian conqueror called Cambyses came into Egypt, and killed the sacred bull of Memphis, a dog eat some of the beef, as it was very natural for a dog to do, and after this he was not worshipped at all.

The only good I ever heard of that came, among a great deal of harm, in this strange worshipping of animals, was that the people were in general kind to them; but, of course, such a religion as this, instead of making them wise, only made them more and more stupid. It is well for us that we have *been taught better.*

LETTER V.

I HAVE told you of some things that seem foolish in the ancient Egyptians, but it would be a great mistake to suppose that there were not a great many things wisely and cleverly managed in a country where people lived quietly and regularly for hundreds and thousands of years. Egypt was indeed considered by the Greeks as the wisest country in the world, and the Greeks ought to have known something about it, for they were themselves among the cleverest people that have ever lived. I believe, however, that there was one circumstance which they thought perhaps rather more of than it was really worth. They considered it a *particular proof* of Egyptian wisdom, that


things went on from age to age with scarcely any change. The truth was, that, among the Greeks themselves, the everlasting restless changes did a great deal of mischief, and so they came to consider the quietness of all things in Egypt as the greatest of all advantages.

But the Egyptians had really many good laws and wise customs. Their kings, for instance, were not despots caring for nothing but their own will, as most kings in ancient times, both before and after them were. They were obliged to govern according to certain laws which were thought to be for the good of the country; and the people who lived with them and formed their court were not slaves but free men, who had received the best education the country afforded, in order, as an ancient writer* says, that "the king, being surrounded by such excellent servants, may not occupy himself

* *Diodorus Siculus.*

with any bad thing, for no prince would carry his bad conduct far, if he had not people about him who ministered to his evil desires."

The king himself in his private life was kept to very strict rules indeed. All the hours of the day, and even the night, were so distributed, that he had scarcely a moment in which he could do what he liked himself, and not merely what the law ordered for him. On first getting up in the morning he had to receive all the accounts that were sent about what was passing in various parts of his kingdom. After this he had to bathe and put on a magnificent dress, with all the grand trappings of his dignity, and go and be present at the sacrifices offered to the gods. When the sacrifice was brought to the altar, the chief priest prayed with a loud voice that the gods would give health and all good things to the monarch if he exercised justice towards his



subjects. The priest then enumerated very exactly all the virtues of the king, saying that he showed veneration to the gods and mildness to men ; that he was abstinent, just, and generous ; that he kept his word, was willing to give, and especially that he could control his passions and desires, that he punished offences less than they deserved, and bestowed on merit superabundant reward. Then the priest cursed all evil doings of which the monarch might have been guilty, but of which the fault was always laid on his servants and counsellors ; and after that the king had to contemplate and offer up the entrails of a sacrificed calf, and a state secretary read out of some holy books useful precepts and the deeds of renowned men, in order to animate the ruler to the performance of his great duties. He was expected to be extremely moderate in eating and drinking ; indeed *the rules were sometimes so strict that*

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they might seem to have been prescribed by some very rigid physician ; and as the king had not even the liberty of choosing his own dinner, it is not surprising that when he had to hear trials and act as a judge, little or nothing was left to his own will. He was obliged to decide everything according to exact rules of law, and could not punish any one from mere anger or caprice. The same writer from whom we take this account declares that the kings were not angry at having to conform to the law in all things, but, on the contrary, considered themselves happy in these restrictions, knowing that other men often follow, in an irrational manner, the bent of their natural passions, and "do many things that occasion them evil and mischief, often even foreseeing that they will act wrong, but doing it nevertheless because they are overcome by their passions." "The Egypt-

tian kings," he adds, "have a rule of life that has been prescribed by the wisest men, and they cannot therefore fall into the smallest error."

I am afraid, however, that he was mistaken in this; for we Christians, who have the best rules of life possible, fall into a great many errors. There is a great difference between knowing what is right and doing it.

LETTER VI.

ON the death of an Egyptian king, every sign of mourning was exhibited over the whole nation. No festival was celebrated for seventy-two days ; the temples were closed ; the people tore their clothes, and scattered dust upon their heads, abstained from animal food, corn, and wine, as well as from baths, soft beds, and every kind of indulgence. During this time, magnificent preparations were made for the funeral, and when the day arrived, the coffin was placed before the entrance to the tomb, and then took place the most remarkable part of the ceremony. The priests began a regular account of the life of the deceased sovereign, and of *the actions* he had performed, during

which any one of the thousands of people assembled might come forward if they liked, and tell anything bad that the king had done. When the priests were talking about his good actions, the people, if they thought what they said was true, signified their approbation, but if not, they made such an outcry that they drowned the voices of the priests. Many of the kings were thus at the last moment deprived of the honours, and the splendid funeral that had been prepared for them, which was of course thought a great disgrace, so that the fear of this happening often kept the kings during their lifetime from behaving ill.

In the very oldest times, according to tradition, the kings were chosen from the warriors or priests, but, for a great many hundreds of years, the crown was what is called *hereditary*, that is, it went to the son after the father died, or sometimes even to the

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daughter. The palaces of the Egyptian kings were immensely large, and ornamented very splendidly. In pictures of them found in their tombs in the ruins of the city of Thebes, we see gilded thrones and canopies, under which the kings sit dressed in long rich robes, and with crowns on their heads. There are plenty of these tombs to be seen, for they extend for a distance of eight miles along the rocks, in rows, one above another.

The kings of Egypt were very rich indeed, for a third part of all the land belonged to them, and all the fish, and the gold mines ; and nobody but the king was allowed to make several things that were very much used, such as paper (or what served the same purpose, though it was nothing like our paper) and bricks. You recollect how cruelly they treated the Israelites about those bricks. The kings of *Egypt must have made a fine profit*

out of these manufactures, for they never had any work-people's wages to pay, as they made their prisoners of war work for them.

The gold mines, too, were mostly worked by criminals for a punishment, so of course their labour cost nothing.

I have said that one-third of the land of Egypt belonged to the king. The other two parts belonged to the priests and the warriors. These warriors formed the nobility of the country. The employment of a soldier, like every other in Egypt, descended from father to son, and they had the land as a payment for their services. Below these three great classes or castes was the mass of the people divided into farmers, who did nearly all the useful work. There were herdsmen, artisans, boatmen, interpreters, and others, every one following exactly the trade of his father. The farmers seem *to have hired* the land of the king or

the nobles. They lived together in villages, in houses raised high enough to be out of the reach of the waters, and with yards and barns for their cattle and provisions. Some of the representations of farming scenes that have been found, show great numbers of persons employed in overlooking the labourers, and others writing down the account of the produce of the corn fields, vineyards, and pastures, and gardens. But these great estates were probably cultivated for the king or the nobles.

The lowest castes were the boatmen and those who kept pigs; and besides these there were slaves, sometimes bought and sometimes prisoners of war; but the Egyptians do not seem to have used them ill, indeed the slaves were often taken quite into the family of the owner and shared in the property.

As the people of Egypt were industrious and their country fertile, they

had plenty of good food, even for the poorest classes. Indeed, it was so cheap that it was said * the whole expense of bringing up a child till he became a man did not amount to more than what is equal to thirteen shillings of our money. It is true that little boys did not cost their parents anything for shoes, for they did not wear any, and indeed but little clothes of any kind. The rich people lived very luxuriously, indeed too much so, for they often drank a great deal more wine than was good for them. There are pictures of gentlemen being taken home from banquets or dinner parties, who are evidently not able to stand upright; and even the ladies, I am sorry to say, appear to have taken more than they ought to have done.

The dress of the Egyptians was, perhaps from the warmth of the climate,

* Diodorus Siculus.

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slighter and simpler than is customary among nations equally civilized. For the working classes it consisted merely of a piece of linen tied round the loins and reaching about to the knee, but the head was protected from the burning rays of the sun, sometimes by a linen cap, white, yellow, or green, and sometimes by a wig, which was considered more fashionable and worn by the higher classes; false beards are, also, occasionally seen, but they could not be intended to pass for people's own hair, as they are tied under the chin or behind the ears by a string. The feet of the middle and higher classes were protected by a kind of sandal, much like the mocassins of the American Indians, some of strong materials, but others made of nothing more than papyrus and palm leaves plaited together; and one, which is kept now in the Berlin Museum, is covered with Greek characters, as if it had been made out of

waste paper, and we may reasonably conclude that people who wore such shoes as these must have been in the habit of sitting most of their time.

Ornaments were much worn, and even the gentlemen carried little looking-glasses to admire themselves in; and they used to paint their bodies with different colours, and stain their eyebrows and eyelashes with some stuff that was meant to make their eyes look bright.

Besides the food and clothing, another circumstance that tells us a great deal of what the habits of a nation are, is the kind of houses that they live in. The poor in Egypt lived in small cottages made only of reeds, but in so warm a country this would not hurt them. The rich built handsome houses of bricks, with columns and porticoes adorned with colossal statues, and with paintings in gay colours on the walls. The windows

were covered with a kind of wicker-work, through which the wind could pass freely, though it kept out the burning rays of the sun. The Chinese still use these wicker coverings to their windows; and, indeed, there are many curious resemblances between the Chinese houses that may be seen now and those of the ancient Egyptians. The floors were covered with matting; and there were stools and chairs, and sofas and tables, often very richly decorated, besides lamps and stands for flowers, sometimes formed of figures of kneeling and fettered prisoners, that were often used for ornaments,—not very pretty ones, I think.

The country-houses had little canals, filled with water from the Nile, running through their gardens, and fish-ponds, and little boats for the people to row themselves about in, just like what the Chinese have now; indeed, as China is known to have been a

civilised country in very ancient times, it is possible that there may have been some connection between the first people who went to Egypt and those who went to China.

The inhabitants of ancient India too, the Hindoos, were very like the Egyptians in many things, in their love of old and settled customs, their quiet submission to people in authority, their patient and persevering characters, and in a great many remarkable customs, such as that of dividing the people into castes, and making every man follow the same occupation as his father and his ancestors.

It has been thought that all these came at first from the same nation, most likely Assyria.

LETTER VII.

THERE was one thing in which Egypt was unlike almost every other country, and that was in the immense power the priests had. In the very early time, as the priests were really the best educated and wisest men, this did no harm. A country that is only beginning to be civilised, is very much like a child. It is better for a child to have somebody always to tell it what it ought to do; and the child makes much more progress by being obedient to some one who is wiser and more experienced; than it would do if it were left always to do what it liked itself. But it would not be good at all that, when the child were grown up, the same plan should be continued. Men and women must learn

to govern themselves, and be free to do what they think good and right. Now, in the very early times, it was better, perhaps, for the people of Egypt to do exactly what they were told, and follow the rules laid down for them by those who knew more than they did.

But, unfortunately, instead of teaching their ignorant countrymen what they knew, as they should have done, the priests tried to keep all their knowledge to themselves; and then, when they found that they could get the people to work for them, and do whatever they liked, they grew lazy, and did not care to improve themselves any more, and then they became stupid. This had another bad effect, too; for the power they had over the people, which was at first only from their superior knowledge, they afterwards tried to keep up, by saying things that they knew were not true, and pretending to be *enchanters*, and making the people be-

lieve that, if they did any thing to offend them, they would be sure to offend the gods. Besides this, instead of trying to make the people sober and thoughtful, and well-behaved, they used to contrive foolish shows in the temples, to amuse them and keep them from thinking, and to have great feasts, in which the people were allowed to get tipsy, and do all sorts of wrong things. One in particular is mentioned, called the Feast of Dionysos, in which thousands of men and women embarked together on the Nile, singing and dancing, and drinking, in the most riotous manner,—and landing at every town they came to, to make the other people join them. You may see in the British Museum representations of processions of this kind,—Bacchanalian processions they were called by the Greeks, who continued this practice from the Egyptians.

In very ancient times, human beings *were sometimes* killed by the Egyptian

priests in their religious ceremonies. In the graves of the Theban kings, representations of these sacrifices have been found,—in which red and blue-coloured men, alternately, are seen lying with their heads cut off, and others tied in painful positions ready to be killed. But this practice was afterwards left off, for the Egyptians were not on the whole a cruel people. Some of the festivals were more innocent and pretty; for instance, that of the Invocation of the Nile, in which the people went to return thanks to the river for the good it had done them, in making their lands fruitful, and to offer it corn and fruit and flowers.

The priests of Egypt, as I have said, were sometimes bad men, who cared only to indulge themselves, and make their countrymen do what they chose; but it would be a great mistake to suppose they were always so. There was *a great deal* of real work to be done,

which only they knew how to do. They were the only doctors, and lawyers, and architects, and writers; and there was scarcely an art or a trade known at the time that was not carried on in the temples under their direction, or by their own hands. Every temple had great tracts of land belonging to it, and in early times they were almost like separate countries, and even sometimes went to war with each other. At the time when Abraham came to Egypt, however, they were all united under one great king.

LETTER VIII.

THE first history of Egypt is nothing but a long list of kings' names,—330, I believe,—which were all written upon rolls of papyrus, a plant whose leaves were used by the Egyptians as a kind of paper (our word *paper* is taken from it). These names were afterwards copied by the two ancient writers, Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus, who have told us so much about Egypt. There are but three or four of these kings of whom we know any thing more than the names, and it would be very tiresome and not of the least use to repeat the names of the rest.

The first of these kings, every one agrees, was called Menes, who lived *before the time of Abraham*. He is

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remembered because he performed a great many useful public works ; and it is said he taught his subjects, or rather I suppose got people to teach them, many useful arts ; and he built the famous city of Memphis. The mighty Thebes existed already, covering both sides of the Nile for many miles ; and this was built under the direction of the priests.

After this, we know nothing more about Egypt till the time of Abraham.

You will remember, I dare say, who Abraham was. He was, you know, a great chief, the owner of immense flocks and herds, and of much gold and silver, who lived with his people in tents, just as many of the Tartar chiefs in Middle Asia do at this day. Like other people who live in the same manner, he was in the habit of moving about from place to place to find pastures for his cattle ; one day he came down from his country of Mesopotamia, on the

eastern side of the river Euphrates, to the banks of the river Jordan. He was renowned for his virtue as well as his riches, and his name is still remembered and spoken of with veneration by the natives of those countries. It was his great-grandson Joseph who, by a number of wonderful accidents, came to be chief minister or vizier of the mighty king of Egypt. How he was sold for a slave by his brothers, who were jealous of him; how he was put into prison, and underwent many misfortunes, but afterwards came to be the greatest man, next to the king, in the greatest country then in the world; how he forgave his brothers and loved them still, and sent for them and his father, and shared his fortune with them and made them as happy as he possibly could, you have read often in the Bible. As well as Joseph's relations, the whole Hebrew people, who were not a great many at that time,

came and settled in Egypt, very naturally, as they knew they had such powerful friends in Joseph and the king who was so fond of him.

This king, you know, is called Pharaoh, but that is a name applied to many, and if it was at first the name of one man, it was afterwards used for whoever was king. This Pharaoh gave the Israelites a large piece of land to live on, and at first I dare say they were very comfortable; but a great change came when that king died, and another succeeded him who was a very different person. Joseph died too, and the Egyptians soon after began to treat the Hebrews very tyrannically; but they were now settled in Egypt, and could not help themselves.

It is possible that those who treated them ill were not exactly Egyptians, for about this time there came on Egypt a terrible invasion of wild fierce *men from the north-east*, who con-

quered the Egyptians, made their chiefs the kings of the country for a long time, and did a great deal of mischief, putting a stop to every good thing that was going on; and it has been thought likely that they began the ill-usage of the Hebrews, or Israelites, as they are after this time called. These invaders are generally known as the Shepherd Kings. They burnt down the Egyptian cities, and killed the inhabitants in great numbers, threw down the statues and shattered the temples of the gods, and destroyed the canals that were so necessary to make the country fertile. In their cruelty towards the Israelites, they at last went so far as to give an order that all the little boys born among them should be killed immediately. At first the people who had been told to do this cruel thing did not like to do it, and made excuses to the king, and pretended they could not; but I suppose a great many

of the poor babies must have been really killed, for we find that the mother of Moses had to make a contrivance to save him. She put him into a basket, and put him on the banks of the Nile just where she knew the princess, the daughter of the king of Egypt, was going down with her attendants to bathe. The princess saw he was a very pretty baby, and took a liking to him, and said she would take him and have him brought up at her own expense, and so she did. His name of Moses, by the by, I am told, meant, in the Egyptian language, Saved from the Water.

And so Moses was brought up at court, and educated by the Egyptian priests in all the learning they possessed, and no doubt, as he was the favourite of a rich princess, had all the indulgences and luxuries that a young noble of that time could have. But he was a fine, brave, noble-minded

young man, and he thought more of the unhappy condition of his people the Hebrews, than of all the fine things he could enjoy at Pharaoh's court ; and one day, when he saw an Egyptian cruelly ill-treating one of his countrymen, he interfered in his behalf, and fought with the Egyptian and killed him. He was now obliged to leave the court, and he escaped into the wild country near Mount Sinai, and after having lived like a prince was content to remain in the lowest station, keeping sheep for a man who lived there, and thinking always of how he might deliver his own people from the state of bitter slavery that they had now fallen into.

This, you know, he at last did, after a succession of wonderful events, which, as you already know, I need not repeat here ; or if you do not remember them, it will be better for you to read them in the Bible itself, as it would make my

letters too long to relate them, and, for the reason I have said, it is not necessary. He led them across the Red Sea and into the deserts of Arabia, thinking, as a wise and brave man would, that, though they would have to suffer many privations, and often perhaps be hungry, it was better for them to be free from men, and able to worship the true God, and do whatever they thought right and good, than to stop in Egypt and have to submit to all sorts of ill-treatment, and be obliged to join in that foolish and wicked worshipping of beasts and creeping things. The Israelites, as they were now called, did not all think so, for of course among so many there were a great number that were neither wise nor brave, and instead of thanking Moses they only grumbled at him, and wished themselves back in Egypt where they had had such good things to eat, and they gave Moses a great deal of *trouble by their ill-behaviour.* This

was not very surprising ; for as the Israelite people remained four hundred years in Egypt, those that came out with Moses, and their forefathers, for several generations had been ill used slaves ; and to make people slaves and ill treat them, is not the way to make them, good and brave. It was most likely for this reason that Moses did not attempt to take them yet to the beautiful country of Canaan, where he intended they should at last settle ; but kept them for many years wandering about, till those who were children when they left Egypt, were grown up to be men, and most of the elder ones who had so much regretted the good things of Egypt had died. These who had been brought up in freedom and poverty he thought would be better and braver men.

LETTER IX.

WELL, the children of Israel, as they sometimes are called, continued to wander about the deserts for a great many years. I suppose I need hardly tell you that, when they are called by this name, it does not mean the real children. The word is only used as the Scotch people used the word—"Children of the Mist," meaning people born among the misty hills of the Highlands.

In the mean time remarkable things were happening in other places. In Egypt which they had left, the Shepherd Kings were driven out; and a king, named, I believe, Amenoph, came to the throne, rebuilt the towns that had been *destroyed*, put the canals in order and *made a great many new ones*, and did

a great deal for the good of the country. A king who succeeded him built the magnificent palace of Luxor, and many fine buildings of which the remains may be seen still, and another executed a great work of more importance, namely, a vast reservoir or lake, called Lake Moëris, which received the water from the Nile when it overflowed too much, and supplied the deficiency when it had overflowed too little, so as always to supply the country with the proper quantity. Many of these kings, of course, made war on the surrounding countries; but the greatest conqueror was one who is generally called Sesostris, but sometimes Rameses the Great. Whatever his name was, he extended his conquests over the principal part of what was then the whole civilised world. He took an immense army across Arabia, and conquered the Assyrian empire, and went beyond it to Persia, and it is said *even as far as the river Ganges,*

and set up a column to tell what grand things he had done, on which he put an inscription, calling himself "Sesostri King of Kings and Lord of Lords." But he would have done much better to stay at home and govern his own kingdom properly; for while he was gone, his brother tried to make himself king; and when he came home afterwards, set fire to his palace and tried to burn him and his whole court. They had all been feasting, and as usual drinking a great deal of wine, and the guards were all too tipsy to give any assistance; but Sesostri himself perceived the danger, and rushed out with his queen.

I suppose after this the brother did not find it very comfortable to remain in Egypt; so he went over to a beautiful wild country called Greece, where he he made himself very useful. He is generally known in history by the name of *Danaus*, and we shall presently have

much to say about the country he went to; but before we begin, we will just take a glance at two or three other civilised communities, spoken of in the Bible and elsewhere, as existing at what we consider the first period of history,—that is, when Egypt and Assyria were the great nations of the world.

One of these lived in the country now called Stony Arabia, which is a completely barren desert, a wide plain covered with deep sands and black flint stones, sometimes heaped up into hillocks that may perhaps cover the remains of ancient buildings, for it was full of towns and villages and thickly inhabited, at the time when Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt. This was the country called Idumea or Edom, and you may remember that Moses sent messengers asking permission to pass through it, and it was refused him. This was very cruel, for the Israelites *promised not to do the least harm.*

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"Let us pass," they said, "and we will not go through the fields, nor the vineyards, but go by the king's highway; and if we and our cattle drink of the water, we will pay for it." But the king of Edom would not allow them to pass, but threatened to bring out his soldiers and attack them if they tried to do it.

We see by what is here said, that it was a cultivated country, and we know by other passages that it had many towns and seaports, and carried on trade with distant places, carrying gold and spices, and silver and precious jewels from one to the other. It was no doubt by means of these Edomites, that the Egyptians got those fine things from India, that they were so fond of.

To show you what progress they had made in thinking, I may mention that *one of the finest books in the Bible, the book of Job, was written by a native*

of Idumea. Perhaps you are too young now to see all the beauty and sublimity of it, but I am sure you will when you are older. These Idumeans are very frequently spoken of in the Bible; but we little thought, at one time, that we should ever see any actual remains of their works. Not many years ago, however, some European travellers, who had heard some stories about the remains of a wonderful city to be seen in the middle of these stony deserts, determined to make their way to it, though it was said to be swarming with scorpions, and, the people of the country nearest to it said, also with evil spirits. This, of course, was all nonsense; but there were many real dangers and difficulties to be got over. However, the travellers got to it at last, and they were well rewarded for their trouble, for they found the city of Petra, with its palaces and temples, private houses and *triumphal* arches, and even an

immense theatre, with rows upon rows of seats for the spectators, all cut out of the solid rock.

Many of these had been evidently made more than a thousand years after the time I have been speaking of, which shows that it had been a flourishing country for a long period, perhaps more than seventeen hundred years. Now it is all desolate, and in all that vast city there is not one person living.

LETTER X.

You may perhaps recollect hearing or reading in the Bible the names of the two great cities, Tyre and Sidon. These both belonged to a small country called Phœnicia, which possessed no other land than a narrow piece of the sea coast of Syria. It was not at all a fertile country, but it had two advantages: the neighbouring mountains of Lebanon had plenty of forests which furnished wood fit to build ships; and being on the sea-shore, there was plenty of fish to be had. People who were not industrious have, it is true, often made nothing of such advantages as these, or even of greater ones; but the inhabitants of Phœnicia were both *industrious and clever*, and they turned

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them to good account. They learnt to make boats and ships, and go out to sea and make long voyages, when hardly any other people ventured to go out more than half a mile from the land. First, they went a little way, to the coast and islands of Greece; then, along the northern coast of Africa; and at last, through the Straits of Gibraltar, and out into the wide Atlantic Ocean, as far north as to some small islands where a few poor, almost savage people lived, from whom they got tin. Do you know the name of the largest of those islands? You know the island itself, at any rate. It is called Great Britain now; but in the time of the Phœnicians, it was only called the largest of the Tin Islands, and nobody thought or cared about it more than we do about any one of the little islands of the Pacific Ocean. I mention, this because it is in the account *given of these voyages of the Phœni-*

cians, that England is spoken of, for the first time.

Well, this Phœnicia was a great trading country at the time when Moses led the children of Israel out of Egypt, and for long afterwards; and it became extremely wealthy. Its chief cities, Sidon and Tyre, are described by the Hebrew prophet, Ezekiel, as beautiful and magnificent, beyond any that had ever yet been seen. "O thou that art situate at the entry of the sea," he says, "which art a merchant of the people for many isles . . . thy builders have perfected thy beauty. They have made all thy ships of fir trees of Senir: they have taken cedars from Lebanon to make masts for thee; of the oaks of Bashan have they made thine oars; the company of the Ashurites (that is, the Assyrians) have made thy benches of ivory; fine linen with brodered work, from Egypt was *that which thou spreadest forth to be*

thy sail; blue and purple from the isles of Elishah was that which covered thee. All the ships of the sea were in thee to occupy thy merchandise; they of Persia and of Lud and of Phut, were in thine army, thy men of war: they hanged shields upon thy walls; they have made thy beauty perfect. Tarshish was thy merchant" (Tarshish was a seaport town on the Red Sea, belonging to the Idumeans); "with silver, iron, tin, and lead they traded in thy fairs; Javan, Tubal, and Meshech, they were thy merchants; they traded the persons of men (slaves) and vessels of brass in thy market."

Horses and horsemen and mules, ebony and ivory, emeralds, purple and embroidery, fine linen, and coral and agate, wine and wool and cattle, honey, oil, and perfumes, gold, precious stones, and rich apparel, and other articles of merchandise, are enumerated as *forming objects* of trade with the surround-

ing countries ; and at the time when other nations only thought of conquering and seizing on each other's possessions by war and violence, the people of Phœnicia, by exchanging the things produced in one country for those of another, brought about a friendly acquaintance and increased the comfort and enjoyment of other people, instead of burning their towns and laying waste their fields as conquerors do. As their country was very small, they soon found they had more inhabitants in it than they wanted, and so they sent out companies of emigrants, and settled colonies all along the north coast of Africa, and even round on the western coast, and in Sicily and in Spain, and on the coast of France. Above three hundred flourishing places arose in countries that had before been quite barbarous ; and the wild people began to learn from these little communities, the advan-

tages of peace, and industry, and knowledge.

Unfortunately, the people of Phœnicia were selfish and jealous, and kept to themselves all the knowledge they got in their many voyages, for fear any other nations should share their advantages; and then by degrees they grew over proud of their riches, and excessively luxurious and wicked.

The same prophet Ezekiel, who admired the city of Tyre so much, speaks of the "iniquity of its traffic," and foretels that, in consequence of this iniquity, it will go to ruin, which has come quite true. What were the exact causes of this melancholy change we do not know, for no history of Phœnicia has ever been found.

LETTER XI.

I HAVE said that Danaus, the brother of King Sesostris of Egypt, left his own country and went to live in Greece. Most probably as he was a prince he did not go alone, but took other Egyptian emigrants with him. Before this time, too, another colony of Egyptians, among whom were probably several priests, had gone out with Cecrops, and settled themselves in Attica, the country where the famous city of Athens was afterwards built. One might perhaps have thought, from so many Egyptians going there, that Greece would have been in many respects like Egypt; but it happened, on the contrary, that no two countries were ever more unlike each other. In the first place, *they were totally unlike by nature.*—

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Egypt, you know, was one long flat valley, watered by one great river, and nearly everywhere quite the same. — Greece is all over mountainous, surrounded on three sides by the sea, and with such immense varieties of soil and climate, that you cannot go two or three miles without finding a change, and there is hardly a morsel of flat country in it.

The Egyptians were a grave quiet people, accustomed to have every thing settled by exact laws, which remained the same for hundreds of years.

The Greeks were the most quick and lively people that ever lived, who liked freedom better than any thing, and were constantly changing their laws and their governments, almost as children do their playthings.

The Egyptians hated the sea; the Greeks half lived upon it. The Egyptian buildings were solemn, heavy, *grand, and stiff*; those of Greece light,

graceful, and full of life. Every thing in Greece was bright, gay, and animated; every thing in Egypt was calm, silent, and fixed.

Go to the Museum, and look at the difference of the Greek and Egyptian statues, and you will see this for yourself.

In the Greek sculptures the marble almost seems as if it could move; the Egyptian look as if they had been always still, and always would be, but as if they would last for ever. Perhaps it might be partly the difference of the country, but it was not altogether that. People are made what they are, partly by education; but there is always something in the differences among men, that we cannot quite account for by it.

But before we say any thing more about Greece, let us try and make ourselves as clear an idea as we can, of what kind of country it was by nature. *If you look at the map, you will see*

that it lies on the northern shore of the Mediterranean Sea. This word Mediterranean, I may as well mention, means "in the middle of the land." People in ancient times used to fancy that the earth was a great flat thing, like a plate, and that this sea was in the middle of it, and that was how they came to give it that name. Greece was a very small country, not so large as England, though it was divided into a great many different states, and though there were more clever people born in it in ancient times, than in all the rest of the world put together. The principal part of it is a peninsula, now called the Morea, but in old times Peloponnesus. It is very much the shape of a vine leaf, and the sea runs up far into it in two or three places, so as to form deep bays. A large arm of the sea, that used to be called the Gulf of Corinth, separates it from the main land on the north side; *and on this lay the countries called*

Thessaly and Bœotia, covered with flocks and herds feeding in beautiful pastures, and with lovely cornfields varied by picturesque and lofty mountains that have become very famous. Going along either shore of the Gulf of Corinth towards the east, we come to another peninsula jutting out from the mainland, to north-east of the Morea. — This is Attica, the most celebrated part of this most celebrated country, where stood the city of Athens, the most beautiful city, I believe, that was ever seen, all built of splendid white marble, filled with temples and statues that were the work of the very finest sculptors and architects that have ever lived.

How glorious it must have looked in the bright sunshine, with the deep blue sky above it, and the fresh, dancing, glittering sea all around! Scattered over with hundreds of lovely islands, and *inhabited* by a people as beautiful

as the country itself. But this city was not built till long after the time I have been speaking of, or at any rate, only a very small part of it.

We have nothing that is certain enough to be properly called history, about this early period when Danaus and Cecrops, and another celebrated emigrant from Phœnicia, named Cadmus, lived in Greece. It is generally supposed, that when they first came, the inhabitants they found there were mere savages, feeding only on wild animals, or any roots or berries they could find on the ground; and that they taught them to plant the vine, to sow corn, to build houses, and to live altogether in a more regular and comfortable manner. But the country was in a very rude state, and for some time after, we hear a great deal of heroes, of whom Hercules was the chief, who went about killing lions, and serpents, *and dreadful dragons*, that were lurk-

ing in forests and caverns on the mountains. Of course these stories are mixed up with much that is not true; but I dare say some part of it is true, that these heroes were really strong brave men, who exposed themselves to danger in destroying fierce beasts, or savage cruel men that had been doing much mischief. The heroes thus earned the gratitude and love of their countrymen; and when the stories of their exploits came afterwards to be told, no doubt much exaggerated, as stories always are when they are often repeated, they represented the heroes as doing things that no one man could do, and then the people supposed that they must have been not mere men, but half gods, or demigods as they were called, and began to worship them.

There passed now nearly three hundred years more, during which we can *make out nothing* very clearly of what

was going on in Greece. But about the end of this time a war took place, in which all the Greeks joined together to go and attack a city called Troy, on the coast of Asia, nearly opposite that narrow part of the sea called the Straits of the Dardanelles, which leads into the Sea of Marmora.

Perhaps we should have known nothing about this war, more than about many others that took place, if it had not happened that the first great poet we know of—Homer—wrote his principal poem about it. This poem is called the *Iliad*; and of course, as it was written for amusement, it contains a great deal that no one, I suppose, ever thought literally true; many things that we may be quite sure were not. But at the same time it contains such a lively description of the manners and characters of the Greeks, that it is more valuable to us than many books called *histories*, which contain the names of

real people, but which give us no notion at all of what sort of people they were. I think, too, that it is most likely that all the principal persons mentioned really did live, and that the greater part of the story is quite true. Of course, it is easy to see that when Homer talks of the gods and goddesses coming down through the air in their chariots to the battles and fighting with the men, or sometimes carrying them off, and when they themselves are wounded, crying and roaring with the pain, that all that is mere fancy, like a fairy story. But we see by all this, and very curious it is to see, what notions the Greeks had of their gods ; that though they thought them more powerful, and mostly more beautiful than mortals, they did not think them more virtuous, but described them as playing all kinds of pranks, like very naughty boys and girls, or sometimes *doing things* that were downright

wicked and disgraceful — quarrelling, scolding, fighting, cheating, stealing, telling falsehoods, and doing all kinds of abominable things.

Sometimes, indeed, there was a very beautiful meaning hidden under what seem at first such very foolish stories; but though I dare say the wise men among the Greeks thought most of this hidden meaning, the greater number of the people certainly did not; and it must have done them a great deal of harm to think that the gods were no better than themselves. They knew of no Divine Father in heaven, to whom they could look up with reverence, or to whose will they could resign themselves with humble trust, feeling sure that whatever he appointed was best.

All the bad effects of such a religion as this did not, however, appear till afterwards. The Greeks at the time of the *Trojan war*, and for at least a hundred

years after, were free, valiant, fighting men, associated together under chiefs called kings, chosen mostly for their superior personal qualities, because they were thought the strongest, the bravest, the handsomest men who could be found, though much respect was paid to those who were what is now called of a good family, that is, whose fathers and grandfathers had been great men; and also to aged and experienced persons, who had seen a great deal of life. The kings had the chief command in war, a certain portion of land assigned to them, and the largest share of the booty when any was taken from enemies. Presents were occasionally made to them from their subjects; but they had no right to impose any taxes, and they could not settle any thing important without calling all the people together, and asking what they thought of it. This *it was*, of course, much easier to do in,

such very small states as those of Greece; and it is for many reasons necessary to recollect what a very little country it was. It was not, as I have said, larger altogether than England, and it contained at one time more than fifty different states or countries, all independent of one another; just as if the county of Middlesex were one separate country or state, and the county of Kent another, and so on, each with its own king. This was the case with Greece at the early time, though afterwards these little states became republics, and were governed by magistrates chosen from time to time.

It was easier for the men of Greece to come to these public meetings, because they left the cultivation of their land, and almost all manual labour, to the prisoners of war of whom they made slaves. But even the kings and *queens of the early times* seem to have

waited upon themselves, and were not at all like the lazy luxurious kings of Assyria, and other Eastern countries, with their trains of attendants about them. The kings and heroes described by Homer, when they have done fighting set about to get their own suppers ready, kill the beasts, skin them, cut them up, and roast them. King Priam of Troy puts a quantity of raw mutton into his war chariot, and drives off with it; the queens and princesses, not only weave the linen and make the clothes, but go out with their maids to do the washing for the family, and do not think it at all beneath their dignity. It does not seem that there were any people employed as artisans and tradesmen, except smiths who made the weapons and armour. All other occupations now performed by mechanics, were carried on by each family for itself, and, of course, in a *very rude manner*; but though there

were no tradespeople, there were, at least not long after, poets and singers, who went about to all the festivals and sung verses about the great deeds of the heroes, and sometimes hymns to the gods.

This is the way that Homer's great poem — the Iliad — and others were first made known. They were sung to music at public feasts and games, at which all the Greeks met together, and of which I shall have more to say by and by.

LETTER XII.



WHEN the city of Troy was at last taken, which it is said was not till it had been besieged for ten years, the Greeks returned to their own country; and then, as might be expected, they found every thing in disorder, and the highest king of all, Agamemnon the king of Mycenæ, was murdered by his own wife, who had forgotten him while he was away and wished to marry some one else. Another, Ulysses, found his kingdom overrun with robbers, and even his palace swarming with them. They wanted his wife Penelope to marry one of them; and when she would not, they would not go away, but stayed eating, drinking, and carousing, and making themselves very dis-

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agreeable, and his aged father, and his little son Telemachus, were not able to turn them out.

A great many quarrels too arose among the different kings after their return; and then some fierce tribes, called Dorians, who said they were descended from Hercules, came from the north of Greece, and made themselves masters of a great part of the south. Altogether, there was nothing going on but war and bloodshed, and the Greeks would have become almost savages again, if it had not been for one very good thing. It was agreed that all the Greeks should meet together once in four years, to perform some grand religious ceremonies; and after that, to enjoy games and amusements together; and that for some time before, and for some time after these meetings, there should be a complete peace between all the states. At these meetings they *became so well acquainted with each*

other that they were less inclined to quarrel, especially as they were obliged to be civil and good-humoured during the time of the Olympic games as they were called; they began to consider themselves more like one people, in spite of all their quarrels and little divisions; and at a time when there were no books or newspapers, it was only at such meetings as these that the people of each state could tell one another what they knew and thought; and whatever it was desirable for all Greeks to know, was written and stuck up on a column for every body to see. Fortunately, they knew how to write; for they had been taught the use of letters, it is mostly thought, by Cadmus, who came from Phœnicia. I have told you that both the Assyrians and the Egyptians were acquainted with a kind of writing; but the Phœnician was the best and most like what we have now. *The first kind of writing people*

think of is, making a kind of picture of any thing they mean to tell you about. For instance, if they wished to say something about a man, they would try and make a sort of drawing of him; but by degrees they would not trouble themselves to draw his whole figure, but only perhaps half of it; and when once people knew what was meant, less and less till at last perhaps a thing like that , a round dot for his head and two strokes for his arms, would be made to serve; or if they wanted to speak of water, which it would be very troublesome to make a picture of, they would merely put a line like this , to represent the way it ripples and flows, and so on. The savages of North America make picture-writing of this kind now, on their buffalo robes, and almost every nation has done so in the beginning; but that way of writing is very tedious and awkward, and there *are many things* which it is quite im-

possible to say at all with it. The Egyptians, I believe, did more with it than any other people; their hieroglyphics, as they are called, are a kind of picture-writing, and those they always continued to use, even after they knew of a better plan.

We must now see what the Israelites were doing during the period when the Greeks were besieging Troy, and for a long time afterwards. After about forty years' wanderings they had at last become settled in their Promised Land, though not without a great deal of fighting. Moses himself never entered it, though he had the satisfaction of looking down upon the beautiful country from the top of a mountain. On the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea, in the country now called Turkey in Asia, you will find what was once known by the names of Palestine or Judea, where so many of the events *told in the Bible* took place. It is a

country of hills and valleys, naturally one of the most fertile in the world, though, from having been for a long time very badly managed, it is now nothing compared with what it was in ancient times. Moses, you know, described it as a land of brooks and fountains, of wheat and barley, of vines, and figs, and pomegranates, of oil and olives,—a land where there is no scarcity of any thing, — a land “flowing with milk and honey;” by which he meant, I believe, that the milk and honey were almost as plentiful as water. In the mountains called Anti-Libanus, in its northern part, rises the river Jordan, which, after flowing for about thirty miles, spreads out into a lake, called in the New Testament the Sea of Galilee, or Lake of Gennesareth, which is about twelve miles long, has very sweet clear water, and abounds in fish. After leaving this lake the Jordan goes on for a *hundred and thirty miles more*, and

then it falls into a great piece of water called the Dead Sea, the waters of which are so excessively salt and unwholesome that no fish can live in them, and no plants grow for miles round. On both banks of this river Jordan, and in the country extending to the sea-coast, the Israelites settled themselves, and they were at first governed by Judges assisted by the High Priests; but after a time they wished to have a king, and though Samuel, who was then High Priest, warned them that they were very likely to be sorry for it afterwards, they would have a king, and he gave them Saul.

The second king of Israel was David, and the third Solomon; but I will say nothing more of them at present, partly because it will be better for you to read their histories in the Bible itself; and partly because what I might have to say concerning them you would per-

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haps not fully understand till you are older.

I may tell you, however, that David, besides being a brave warrior and a great king, was a poet, and wrote most of those psalms of which a prose translation is still read in our churches. In his reign the Israelites conquered all the surrounding country, and extended their dominion from the Euphrates to Egypt. He entered into an agreement with the people of Tyre, and got from them the cedars with which he built a palace, and began the city of Jerusalem, which increased in size so rapidly that it soon covered all the neighbouring hills. That on which the castle or palace of Jerusalem stood was called Zion; and near Zion rose another, called Moriah, on which, afterwards, was built the great Temple. These two hills were connected by a bridge, and near them lie the two hills Akra and Bezetha; beyond Akra you will find Gol-

gotha, and on the other side of the rivulet or Brook Cedron, the Mount of Olives. I mention these places because they are spoken of so often in the New Testament, in the account of the life of our Saviour Jesus Christ; but the time of King David, which I am now speaking of, was more than a thousand years before Jesus Christ was born.

Solomon the son of David, and next king of Israel, was the one who built that magnificent Temple, which exceeded in splendour any thing that had ever been seen. We hear of its vast courts, with ranges of lofty columns of white marble; of gates made entirely of Corinthian brass, others glittering all over with real gold and silver; folding doors covered with gold; costly curtains from Babylon sweeping from ceiling to floor of a hall as high as the inside of St. Paul's Church; golden vines, and clusters of golden grapes as *long as the height of a man*, the work

of the finest artists that could be found in Tyre or Sidon. "It reflected," we are told, "such a dazzling effulgence, that when the sun shone on it, it could scarcely be looked at."* I am afraid very heavy taxes must have been laid on the people to pay for all this splendour; but the Temple was an object of joy and pride to the whole nation, and it is far better to expend money on a great national work of this kind, in which the poor as well as the rich can take pleasure, than on the luxuries of private houses, which contribute to the enjoyment of nobody but the owner. It is quite natural, too, and right, that they should wish to make the place where they went to worship God as beautiful as they could; only I am afraid they afterwards came to think too much of these things, and to forget what was of far more consequence.

* Josephus.


In the reign of Solomon's son, King Rehoboam, the people revolted because of the heavy taxes, and, as he refused to make them less, ten out of the twelve tribes would not have him any longer for their king, and chose another ; and so, instead of one united people, there were now two, separate and enemies to one another, one called the kingdom of Israel, and the other the kingdom of Judah. This had a great many bad consequences ; and one of the worst was, that the people of Israel would not now come any more to worship at the Temple, because it stood in the territory of Judah. A very great change for the worse took place in the character of the people ; and the consequence of this change, and of all the quarrelling among themselves, was, that when they were attacked by a foreign enemy they could not defend themselves, and so they were conquered by the kings of *Assyria*.

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About four hundred years after the time of Solomon, Jerusalem was taken, the beautiful Temple destroyed, and the people dragged away to be made slaves ; the last were taken by King Nebuchadnezzar. Many of the wise men, called prophets, had told them often that this would certainly happen if they did not behave better ; but they paid no attention to them, and actually asked one of the kings of Assyria to come and help them to fight their own countrymen. Did you ever hear that poem beginning—

“ The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold ;
And the sheen of his spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.”

This poem was indeed written about another event, but that verse will do *as well* for one as the other.



LETTER XIII.

WHEN the Jews were taken as slaves to Assyria, it was not to the city of Nineveh they were carried, for that had been already burnt. The last of the old Assyrian monarchs, one named Sardanapalus, had, it is said, when he found that he could not defend himself and his capital against some of his subjects who had rebelled against him, set fire to his palace, and burnt himself and his family, and his treasures all together. There is a great deal of uncertainty and confusion about the story, but many of the fragments of the palace found by Mr. Layard bear evident marks of having been in a *great fire*.

The city of Babylon, to which the Jews were now dragged, was one that had been built by Nebuchadnezzar after Nineveh was burnt, though it is thought by some that there was another city of Babylon before. It was a most enormous place, more like a county with a wall round it, than a town, and had within it great pastures for cattle and corn-fields, as well as gardens. It would be a great mistake, however, to suppose that the city, which it took three days to travel through, had houses all the way as close as they are in London; but it did contain an enormous number of people, and was a very grand place indeed. You recollect that proud fellow Nebuchadnezzar boasting of it, and saying, "Is not this great Babylon that I have built by the might of my power and for the honour of my majesty?" But the poor Jews, I dare say, had little enough pleasure *in looking at it*. "By the rivers of

Babylon," they said, "we sat down and wept;" and they tell how, when the foreign people told them to be merry and sing one of the songs of their country, they could not, but they hung their harps up upon the trees, and sat down, saying sadly, "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?"

So passed away seventy years, mournfully enough for them, in slavery and exile, but at the end of that time there came a change. You know the terrible story of Nebuchadnezzar;—how a strange kind of madness came over him, and he used to wander about the fields and gnaw the grass like the cattle; and of his son Belshazzar, who, in the midst of his revels at a great feast, where he was surrounded by all the pomp and splendour of his glittering court, was suddenly terrified by seeing some writing on the wall near him, which told how his kingdom

and his life would soon be taken from him. And so it was. He was attacked by the chief of a neighbouring nation, a very brave and, for that time, a wise man, named Cyrus, who conquered him, and released the Jews from their captivity, and sent them back to their own country.

We must now go and see what was going on at this time in Greece. If you look in the map at the peninsula which forms the most remarkable portion of it, you will see at the south two large bays, or gulfs. Into the one to the east, or right hand, in ancient times called the Gulf of Laconia, there flows a small river, then called the Eurotas, and, about twenty miles from its mouth, there stood Sparta, one of the two most famous cities of all Greece, the capital of the little state of Laconia or Lacedæmon. It was not more than sixty miles long and thirty-five miles *broad*, not so large as the county of

Kent, but it contained the most warlike people perhaps that ever lived, in which the very women were like brave soldiers, though they were not, I believe, generally what we should call good women, such as we could love ; at all events, not at the time when the Spartans were most renowned.

The valley of the Eurotas is very picturesque, and remarkable for its beautiful shrubs and fruit trees, being sheltered from the north and east winds by ridges of mountains, and open to all the sweet breezes of the southern sea. There are, too, on the coast several fine seaports that might have been of great use to a trading people, but the Spartans seemed to care about nothing but war. On the west of Sparta there arose another range of loftier mountains, where there are rugged precipitous rocks, and deep ravines, and snowy peaks, and dark forests, and all sorts of *grand wild scenery*. These moun-

tains separated the Spartans from the people called Messenians, with whom they had many fierce wars ; but if they would only have associated peaceably together, they might have been more powerful and beyond comparison more happy. Just think if the men of the county of Kent and those of the county of Sussex were always at war with one another, burning each others' houses, destroying fields, and killing each other whenever they met !

Well, about three hundred years after the siege of Troy, there was born in Sparta a man named Lyncurgus, who well deserves to be remembered. The first thing we hear of him was that he refused to take advantage of a plan that was formed to make him king, because he thought he had no right to be so. He was the brother of a king of Sparta who had died when his son was *only* a little baby, just born, but which,

according to the custom of the country, had a right to be king after its father. But its mother the queen was wicked enough to offer to let the baby be killed if Lycurgus liked to marry her, and make himself king. Instead, however, of agreeing to this shameful proposal, he said he would protect the little baby, and take care of the country for him till he was old enough to do so for himself; and so he did.

After a time he found it was impossible to govern a country well that had no settled laws; but he knew it was a very difficult thing to make good laws, and perhaps still more so to get people to obey them after they were made. The first thing he did, therefore, was to travel into all the most civilised countries of the world, and learn how they were governed, and what kind of laws they had. Now travelling in those days was not an easy and pleasant

thing as it is now. If people went by the sea, the ships were badly built, and the sailors knew very little how to manage them, and they had no such thing as a compass to guide them, and travellers were sometimes tossed about and lost their way for years in going short distances that now take but a few days. If they went by the land, there was a great deal of unsettled country where there was no road, no house, and of course no food to be had, and which was swarming with wild beasts; and in the neighbourhood of the cities, where there were perhaps fewer wild beasts, there were robbers and fierce lawless men, who were just as bad.

In spite of these dangers, and I dare say a great many more which I know nothing about, Lycurgus travelled through all Asia Minor and Egypt, Babylon, and some say to India, and afterwards to the island of Crete, *where there were said to be very wise*

laws. One cannot help thinking it a great pity he did not go to Jerusalem, for there he might have become acquainted with the laws of Moses ; but very likely he did not know any thing about them, for in those days there was so little communication from one country to another that people very often had no notion at all of what was going on in places that were almost close to them. If they wanted to send a letter, (even if they knew how to write one,) they had to get somebody to travel to the place it was to go to, and take it. If they could not do that, they must go themselves.

Lycurgus himself, it is thought, did not know how either to read or write ; I suppose at this time nobody in Greece did, except perhaps here and there a priest or a poet ; and very few even of them, for the poets used to go about singing the verses which they had made at the *Olympic games*, and other places

where a number of people were assembled, and some celebrated poems were sung in this way, and learned by one from another for hundreds of years before they were written down.

LETTER XIV.

LYCURGUS was away from Sparta as much, at least, as ten years; but at last he was induced to come back by hearing that the country was getting into great confusion, and that his help was much wanted. When he arrived, he found, among other bad things, that a few men had got almost all the property into their own hands, and that the rest were suffering much from poverty and want. He resolved, therefore, to divide all the property again, and give every one an equal share; and it is a wonderful proof of what a high character he had among his countrymen, that he did at last induce them to agree to what the rich people must have disliked so much.

The first thing Lycurgus did was to

divide the land into as many parts as there were families, and give to each what he thought was sufficient for its subsistence ; but as he was determined that the property of the citizens should remain equal, he would not let them cultivate their land themselves, for he knew, if they did, the industrious man would soon have been richer than the idle one. There was at this time in Sparta an unfortunate race of people called Helots, who had been the inhabitants of the neighbouring city of Helos, but who had been conquered in war, and dragged away to be made slaves, as the Jews had been when they were taken to Babylon ; it was the common custom of that age, when people were conquered. Well, these Helots were made to cultivate the ground and do all kinds of work for the Spartans, not only without receiving any wages for it, but being all the time most cruelly treated. *We know that it is wicked to behave*

ill to any one, and most especially shameful when the person is in our power, and cannot defend himself. But the Greeks did not know this; they thought if a man was brave and loved his own country, it did not matter about any thing else.

After he had divided the land, Lycurgus began to divide the money, and every thing people had; and then there was a dreadful riot. The rich men threw stones at him, and one of them struck him such a blow with a stick that it struck out one of his eyes. But when the people saw the blood streaming down his face, they were so angry that they seized the young man (Alexander was his name), and gave him to Lycurgus to punish. But Lycurgus forgave him, and did not punish him at all; and afterwards Alexander himself was very sorry indeed for what he had done.

When Lycurgus had divided the

money, he thought what he should do to prevent people from being so fond of it, and he hit on what seems a very funny plan. He said there should be nothing but iron money, and such great clumsy stuff, that as much as thirty pounds value made a whole room full. People in other countries would not have this money in exchange for their goods, and so the Spartans were obliged to leave off having the goods, and content themselves with what their own country could produce.

To prevent people from being too fond of eating and drinking nice things, he said they should only eat certain things, which though, I believe, not unwholesome, were sometimes very disagreeable. Especially a certain stuff called black broth is mentioned, of which a French gentleman not very long ago had some made, to try it; *but it was so nasty it almost made his guests sick, and nobody could eat it.*

In order to make sure that the Spartan people did really eat nothing else but what was ordered, no one was allowed to cook at home, but each had to bring a certain quantity of provisions, which was then all cooked in the same way, and served up at great public tables, where every body had to take his meals. Even the kings were obliged to come to these tables, and dine like other people. There were, besides, some very strange, and I think very bad laws about marriage; but as I do not think this is a subject you can judge well of at your age, I shall say nothing more about them here; but I now come to something that was very shocking.

When a baby was born in Sparta, it was taken away from its parents to be examined; and if it was found to be weak and sickly, the poor little thing was thrown down into a deep cavern in

a mountain, and left to die. The Spartans wished to have none but strong fine-looking men and women, and they did not consider how it often happens that those who are weakly in their bodies, and perhaps ugly, are so clever and amiable that they are a blessing to every body about them, and indeed to the whole world. Many of the most celebrated men of genius who have ever lived were sickly, and some of them deformed.

If the baby was thought strong enough to be allowed to live, it was still not sent back to its parents, but brought up by people appointed by the government.

When the boys were only seven years old, they were enrolled into little regiments and taught to fight, and to bear pain and hunger and cold without any complaint. This was very good; *for one of the noblest and grandest things any one can learn is, to bear pain*

of any kind patiently, and if possible cheerfully.

In Sparta, however, it was the custom to flog children most severely, without their being in fault, merely to accustom them to suffer in silence. Now this, I think, is not at all necessary, for what with illness and the various little accidents that children meet with, there are always opportunities enough for them as well as grown people to learn to bear pain; all we have to do is to take advantage of them, and learn fortitude and patience. It is unnecessary cruelty to hurt any body on purpose; and as it would hardly fail to make them angry, it must have done more harm than good.

I have no doubt that it was the boys who had been treated in this manner who, when they grew up, used to beat and even kill the poor Helots for nothing at all.

The girls were brought up much in

the same manner as the boys, except that I believe they were not actually taught to fight. They were made to wrestle, and leap, and swim, and dance in public with scarcely any clothes on, and every thing done to make them very strong in their bodies, without thinking at all of their minds. There is a Greek play in which a gentleman, meaning to pay a lady a compliment, says, "How handsome you are! Why, you look as if you could strangle a bull."

Now, it is certainly not necessary that a lady should be strong enough to strangle a bull, but it would do no harm. When we find, however, how cruel and unfeeling the Spartan women often were, we see what the consequence was of so entirely neglecting to teach them to be good and kind in their own homes. Indeed, it seems that there could have been no such thing as what *we call a happy home in Sparta; and*

the great mistake Lycurgus made in his laws was, in never thinking of the happiness of families, but only of the advantage of the state; though the state is of course nothing but a collection of families. There are some terrible stories of the cruel behaviour of the Spartan mothers to their sons who had been defeated in battle. Now we know very well that in battles, as well as in many of the affairs of life, people who do their best do not always succeed. Where many strive together, some must be defeated; but Christians know that if they do as well as they can in any situation, God will always be pleased with them, let men think of them as they may.

Perhaps you may think that, if there were so many things in the laws of Sparta that were not right but quite wrong, Lycurgus was not a very wise man after all; but this would certainly *be a mistake*. What he wanted to do

was, to make a nation of brave soldiers and patriots; and this he certainly did. We intend to make people good Christians, which is a much better thing; but we do not succeed in it quite so well as Lycurgus did in what he meant to do.

The Spartans used to go to battle as readily and joyfully as if they had been going to some merry game, and thought nothing of any hardship or suffering which they had to endure in the cause of their country. Their notions of what was good were indeed very barbarous and imperfect; ours are far better, but it would be well for us if we were as brave and steady in doing what we know to be right, as they were in doing what they thought to be so.

LETTER XV.

THE other most famous state of Greece was Attica, and its fame was better than that of Sparta, for its inhabitants were not merely soldiers but the most learned and clever even of the clever Greeks.

I have said that the land of Greece was broken by many long bays or arms of the sea running up into it; the south part, indeed, is made up of a succession of these bays and the peninsulas that divide them. Beyond the peninsula of Laconia, to the east, is another, then called Argolis; and beyond that again the peninsula of Attica. It is of a triangular shape, about fifty miles long and thirty broad, not very fertile by *nature*, but, in the prosperous times of

Athens, most beautifully cultivated. It has lovely olive groves, streams as clear as crystal, and great quarries of that exquisite marble which made such a fine material for its buildings and statues.

In the early times we hear of Attica, like all the other little states of Greece, being governed by kings; but these were afterwards changed for magistrates called Archons. There is a story about the last king, Codrus, that is worth remembering.

The territory of Attica was invaded by enemies, to whom it had been foretold that they should gain the victory if they avoided killing the Athenian king, and of course they took the greatest care not to do so. It happened, however, that the king, Codrus, found out what made them so very forbearing, and he resolved to give up his own life for the sake of his country. He put *on the dress* of a peasant, therefore,

and went to the enemy's camp, where he purposely got into a quarrel with some private soldiers, who attacked and killed him, as he meant they should.

The next day the Athenians found out what had happened, and sent in great sorrow to ask for the dead body of their king; and the enemies, remembering the prophecy, were struck with such terror that they broke up their camp, and left Attica as fast as possible, without attempting again to attack the Athenians. The story goes, that this was the reason the kingship was abolished, for that the Athenians said no man was worthy to be king after Codrus; though I don't think this seems very likely. But, whether this was the reason or not, Athens was from this time governed by magistrates called Archons, who were chosen at first for life, then for ten years, and afterwards for only one year at a time.

It was not long after the death of

King Codrus that we hear of the first of those great emigrations which the Greeks were constantly making. It was a very good thing for them to do, for their own little states easily got too full of people, and there was then plenty of unoccupied land in the beautiful countries round the Mediterranean Sea. A considerable number of people from Attica and the Peloponnesus went now and settled themselves in Asia Minor, the land on the southern shores of the Black Sea, and built by degrees no less than twelve very fine cities, besides leaving settlements on many of the islands of the Ægean Sea, as that part of the Mediterranean is called that lies between Greece and Asia Minor. Before this time colonies of Greeks had settled in the south part of Italy and in Sicily; and nearly all of them had gone on very well, and become free, prosperous, flourishing *communities*, that were very useful to

the old countries, and kept up a constant intercourse with them, and traded with them across the sea. And so the Greeks learnt commerce and navigation, that is, they learnt to be good merchants and sailors as well as warriors; and they contrived, too, to find time to attend to music, and poetry, and sculpture, and painting, and all things that were beautiful, in most of which they excelled every other people that have ever lived, before or since.

The first man whom we find celebrated for making laws in Athens was one named Draco, who was Archon or chief magistrate of Athens about a hundred years after Lycurgus lived in Sparta; but I have often wondered why he should have been celebrated, for certainly his laws were not good ones even for that time. I believe the reason was, that before Draco lived, the Athenians had no settled laws at all; and this was found

so very bad, that they were at first glad of any regular and settled ones. Very little is known of his laws; but they were, it seems, so dreadfully severe, that it was a common saying that they were written in blood. He used to say that the smallest offence deserved to be punished with death, and that he knew of no other punishment for the greatest; so all offences were punished alike. Now, the consequence of this great mistake was that at last nobody minded the laws, for they were very seldom executed, so things got into as bad or worse a state than they were in before. The death of Draco was very strange. It is said there was then a singular custom in Athens, when a great man came in, for the people to throw their cloaks upon him by way of showing their respect. I don't know whether it is certain this was the custom, but it seems to me that it *must* rather have been to throw down *their* cloaks before the great man, as

we find, in the New Testament, the people did before our Saviour when he came riding into Jerusalem. However that was, the people chose to be so very respectful to Draco, that one day when he came into the theatre they threw all their cloaks upon him at once, and suffocated him.

It was not many years before the Athenians got a much better legislator, another Archon named Solon, who immediately repealed many of the terrible and really unjust laws of Draco; such, for instance, as one that enabled a man, to whom another owed money and who did not, or perhaps could not, pay him, to take the debtor and sell him for a slave. Now it is quite right that people should be compelled to pay what they owe; but the being sold for a slave is so very much greater an injury than the not having a sum of money that is owed to you, that the law was not only excessively severe but quite

unjust. This, as I said, Solon repealed, and he made, besides, some excellent laws of his own ; but, as this is a subject which you cannot be supposed to understand or take much interest in at your age, I shall say nothing more about it here. One thing I may mention, however,—that Solon was one of the few ancient lawgivers who seem to have had some humane feelings for the poor slaves. He made some laws for their protection, and even declared that if a master were excessively harsh, the slave might leave his service for that of another ; but the lot of a slave is, I am afraid, at the best a very miserable one. Even in Athens, it was the custom to sell them in droves like cattle, and they were never thought of in any other way than as machines that were to be set to work for the good of their masters. The number of the slaves in Athens was nearly *three times* as great as that of the free *people*.

LETTER XVI.

As I wish to convey to you as good an idea as I can of what the state of the world was at each successive period, I shall now, before going on with the history of Greece, turn to another country, of which you have yet heard nothing, but of which you will by and by hear a great deal; for, for many hundred years it was by far the most important one in the world, and indeed ruled over almost all the inhabited world then known.

There was an old tradition, that when the Greeks took the city of Troy, Eneas, one of the sons of the king, made his escape with some of the other Trojans, and, getting into a ship, put *out to sea* without knowing whither

he was going, and only anxious to escape from his victorious enemies, who had set fire to the city, and were slaughtering all the inhabitants without mercy, as men did in those days when they took a town they had been besieging.

Now we have no means at all of knowing whether this was true,—that is, whether any such man as Eneas really lived, and if he did, whether he ever came to Italy, and married the daughter of a king of the Latins, from whom afterwards came the first founder of Rome, as the story says. I think it not unlikely that it may be at least partly true, though people have been inclined to disbelieve it, because it has been made the subject of a poem, and so of course mixed up with much that is evidently fancy.

There is, however, no more useful *thing* in history than the way in which *it teaches us* (if we study it properly)

to distinguish between what is true and what is false in a story; and nothing can be more unwise than to throw away altogether as false the accounts of ancient times, merely because the truth is mixed with some falsehood, which we can generally separate from it, if we take the trouble.

Now this is what people have been lately rather inclined to do. The old writers of history used to set down every story that they heard, almost without any examination, and tell things for history that were obviously all nonsense. Now when people found this out, they went to the other extreme, and disbelieved all that was told them about what happened long ago, which was a worse mistake than the other. To give you an example. Among many other stories about the heroic times of ancient Greece was one of a certain Jason, who is said to have *made a voyage* to some place on the

coast of the Black Sea to bring home some sheep that were born with golden fleece instead of wool. Now when people began to think of this story, they felt sure that no sheep ever were born with fleeces of gold instead of wool, and they said, "What a silly old story; it's all nonsense and falsehood." But it has been now found out that there was a great deal of truth in it after all; for in the place to which Jason is said to have gone, there is a river whose sands contain gold, and the people are in the habit of laying the fleeces of sheep in the river, that the gold may settle upon them. Probably there was at that time, more than two thousand years ago, a much greater quantity of gold found there; and nothing is more likely than that these fleeces were what Jason went to fetch, though the Greeks, with their lively fancy, and fondness for stories, *mixed up* with the truths a mass of

fictions, as we call them ; that is, things known by every body not to be true, but said for amusement.


Whether Eneas did or did not make this voyage to Italy, does not matter at all, however. If he did not, some one else did, for it is certain that some of the first civilised inhabitants of Italy came from those parts of the world in which Troy was situated.

What we really want to know is, what kind of country Italy was at that time.

Italy, you know, is a very long, narrow peninsula, stretching out into the Mediterranean Sea ; and it is like Greece in this respect, as well as in being a very beautiful and picturesque country. The majestic Alps, the highest mountains in Europe, with their topmost peaks covered with everlasting snow, rise like a gigantic wall to enclose it, and keep off the cold winds of the north. *Another ridge of less lofty mountains,*

called the Apennines, runs southward along the whole length of the peninsula, and among these mountains there appears the most surprising variety of climate and productions, some districts being most rich and fertile, and others mere naked rock.

In the earliest times we hear of the northern parts being inhabited by a race of fierce wild men, called Gauls, who had somehow made their way through the mountains from the north or north-west. Doubtless they were the descendants of some of those who had wandered away along the northern shores of the Black Sea from the parts of the earth first peopled, and, from never keeping up any communication with the old country, had forgotten where they came from, and all about it, and by degrees became quite savage, living, as they must have done in that wandering life, merely by hunting wild *animals*.




Southward of these Gauls, as far as the river Tiber, but chiefly in what is now called Tuscany, there lived a very different people, the Etruscans, of whom we have fortunately some means of knowing something, as many of their tombs have been discovered containing quantities of their paintings, and many articles of their manufacture, which shew them to have been a civilised nation acquainted with many of the arts ; and as these strikingly resemble those of Egypt and Phœnicia, there is every probability that the Etruscans came from one or other of those countries, or from both. Most of these very remarkable antiquities are now in the British Museum, and may be seen by any one.

It was the discovery of these that first made it known that there had been such a people ; but in the search since made, more things have been *found out* about them ; and it appears

that, besides the arts I mentioned, the Etruscans were acquainted with architecture, and ship-building, and medicine, and were altogether a cultivated, clever people; and it was they who began to build many of the great cities of Italy.

About the first building of Rome, and the first people who lived in it, there have been certain stories told a great many times over, and for a long while supposed to be true, but it is now found out there is no authority for them at all.

For many hundred years the Romans were too busy in fighting with their neighbours all round, and getting possession of one bit of territory after another, to think of such a thing as writing or history; and afterwards, when they did begin to write books, they thought only of imitating the books that had been written by the *Greeks*; and when at last it did occur



to some one to ask who the Romans were, and where they came from, all that could be told was, that there had been some old ballads, something like our Chevy Chase, that told about two brothers, called Romulus and Remus, the sons, it was said, of Mars, the god of war ; that these two brothers had been thrown into the river Tiber, when they were first born, but that a she-wolf who saw them had pulled them out of the water, and suckled them ; that they had then been taken by a shepherd, and kept in his hut till they were grown up, and that then they had founded the city of Rome, whose inhabitants at first had been only a set of lawless men, collected from all the country round. It is said also that, as they had no wives, the Romans invited a neighbouring people, called the Sabines, to a grand feast, and that when they were all making merry, the Romans suddenly seized upon all the women and carried

them off, to have them for wives for themselves.

After this we hear of a number of kings; of a Numa Pompilius, who was a wise, peaceful, virtuous monarch; of others, named Tarquin, who were so tyrannical and wicked that they were driven out, and the Romans declared they would not have a king any more, but that Rome should be a republic. The exiled king Tarquin begged assistance from the most powerful prince in Italy, the Etruscan or Tuscan king, Porsenna of Clusium, who marched against Rome with so great an army that it was evidently impossible to save the town unless something could be done to stop them. The only chance was to cut down a wooden bridge across the Tiber, which was a deep and rapid river, but the enemies were now so close that they had almost reached the other end of it, when a noble brave man, *named Horatius*, stepped forward, and

said that as it was a very narrow bridge, he thought if two others would join him they could keep off the enemy long enough for the Romans to break down the bridge behind them. Of course he thought he would be killed, but he did not mind that if he could save his country. Then two others did offer to go, and they went, and stood fighting desperately while their countrymen cut and hacked away at the bridge, and at last down it went; but by this time two out of the three had got back. Horatius had not been able to escape over the bridge, but he leaped into the water with his armour on, and, after a great deal of struggling, swam back to his countrymen, the Tuscans all the while shooting arrows at him as fast as drops in a shower of rain. Other accounts say that all three were killed, and which of these accounts is the true one we do not know.

The enemies were stopped for that

time, but King Porsenna made a camp near the city, and began to besiege it; and as it was then a small town, with no strong defences about it, there was no doubt that it would have been taken before long. Very soon the Romans began to suffer greatly from hunger, and then three hundred of the young men of Rome made an agreement together that they would swim across the Tiber, and go to the camp of Porsenna, and kill this terrible enemy, in the hope of saving Rome. They were not to go all together, but one after another, so that if ever so many were killed in the attempt, there would be others to take their places. One named Mutius went first, and made a rush into the king's tent, and killed the person whom he saw there; but unluckily it was not the king, but only a secretary. Mutius was then immediately seized and brought before Porsenna, who asked him how it happened

that he was not afraid to make such an attempt, as he was almost sure to be killed for it, and ordered that he should be tortured ; but Mutius thrust his right hand into a fire and stood still while it was burning, without giving the least cry or sign of pain ; and then he told Porsenna of the three hundred young men who, he said, could all bear pain as well as that ; and he asked him whether it was likely they would be too much afraid to try and do so great a service to their country as the killing him would be.

The king then began to consider that if there were three hundred of them equally determined, most likely some one of them would succeed, and so he thought it better to make peace with the Romans, and go away. It was not, indeed, without their consenting to give up to him the third part of their land ; but this was better than *being destroyed altogether*. After this

Mutius got also the name of *Scævola*, which means *left-handed*.

The other small nations around the Romans now took the opportunity to attack them, when they thought they were not so strong as they used to be; and so they became engaged in continual wars, and at last they got so fierce and angry, that they said that they would never make peace with any people till they had conquered them.

How they kept their word we shall see by and by. The things I have been telling you of, happened not long after the time when the Jews returned from captivity in Assyria.

Soon after this time we hear a great deal of quarrels among the Roman people themselves, — between the higher classes, called patricians, and the low, called plebeians, who complained that in these wars they were continually obliged to leave their *farms and fields*, to go and fight, and

besides that, had to pay the greatest part of the expenses. To do this, they had to borrow money of the nobles,—the patricians, as they were called, who charged them a great price for lending it; and then if it happened, as it often did, that they could not pay their debt, the nobles might take them for slaves, or shut them up in dungeons. Sometimes, even, people in distress would sell themselves and their families for the sake of borrowing money, and never being able to pay, they remained slaves for life. This was the beginning of the quarrels between the patricians and the plebeians, of which we hear so much in the history of Rome; but after a time, alterations were made in the laws, which made the condition of the poor much better than it had been, and they were allowed to choose some magistrates, called Tribunes, who were to take care that they were better treated *in future*.

Nearly four hundred years after the first building of Rome, there came a terrible misfortune. A great body of fierce wild men, almost naked, with long shaggy hair, made their appearance near Rome, and attacked it with fury. These were the Gauls, of whom we afterwards hear so much. There were seventy thousand of them, it is said; and the Romans finding it impossible to defend their city, made their escape from it, carrying with them all the property that they could save. All went but eighty priests and aged nobles, who could no longer fight, so they sat down quietly in their robes, and waited for death. They were all killed, and the burning and plundering went on, it is said, for several days. If this is true, the city must by this time have grown very large.

The Romans had soon collected men enough to have a battle with their *enemies*, and at length they succeeded

in driving them out, and then set to work and built their city again, though for a long time they must have had a great many hardships to suffer, for their corn-fields were all trampled down and destroyed, and their town reduced to a mere heap of rubbish. Indeed, the spirit and courage they showed in times of misfortune, is, I think, one of the things most to be admired in the Romans.

LETTER XVII.

LET us now see what the rest of the world had been doing during this time. This is the year 3500 ; and there have, we find, been great changes. Of Assyria and Egypt, and Judea, we now hear little more. The places are there, of course, but they are no longer independent flourishing countries. They are all included within the great Persian empire, which was begun by that Cyrus who released the Jews from their captivity in Babylon.

But Greece has risen into a state of splendour beyond what any one could have imagined before, and which wanted indeed only one thing to make it the most happy and glorious country ever seen. But that one thing was worth all the rest. It was, a better religion.

For want of that, and the better knowledge of what was right and virtuous, which a better religion would have given, Greece lost all its glory, and sunk down to be quite worthless and insignificant.

In the days of its greatness, it was covered with beautiful cities; all its numerous harbours were crowded with ships; its land was richly cultivated, and all full of inhabitants, free, clever, industrious; and, at the same time, more witty, handsome, and elegant, than any other nation has ever been. Here knowledge was not, as in Egypt, confined to one class of the people; it was open to all. Every one was free to choose what occupation he would follow, what he liked best, and what he had most talents for. The young Athenians, though they did practice gymnastic exercises, such as running, leaping, wrestling, fencing, and every thing that could improve the growth and strength

for their bodies, as well as the Spartans, also learned grammar and music, and whatever was thought good for their minds. When they wanted to speak of a very ignorant fellow, they used to say, "He can neither swim nor read," thinking one as necessary as the other: — and at their great public meetings at the Olympic and other games, all the beautiful poems, and the best books used to be read aloud, mostly by the authors; and all the people, even the lowest, could thus share in the pleasure and benefit of them, as well as the rich. Even the girls, who, on the whole were not well used in Greece, were taught to read and write, as well as to spin and sew, and the slaves were often well enough educated to help to teach the children of the family. I don't mean to say that I think this was a good plan, for children should be taught to respect *and* obey those who know more than *themselves*, and can teach them; and I

am afraid this would not be done with a slave whom they could order about as they liked ; but I only mention it to show that even the slaves were not kept in ignorance,—as I am sorry to say they are now in some countries where there are slaves,—but shared in many of the advantages enjoyed by their masters in education, besides being well fed and sufficiently clothed.

I have spoken of books among the Greeks, but of course you must not suppose that there were any books like ours in use. There was still no such thing as paper known, nor for many hundred years afterwards. The laws of Lycurgus were never written down at all,—those of Solon were written on pieces of wood,—the poems of Homer, I believe, on the insides of sheep-skins,—and the Egyptian plant, the Papyrus, was still the best material for writing known. Then, and long afterwards, down to the time when the art of print-

ing was invented, there were people who lived entirely by copying books; and we hear that a very famous man, named Demosthenes, had industry and patience enough to copy out a certain book of history eight times.

One thing that served both to instruct and amuse the Athenians, was the going into the courts of law, for no lawyers ever made such beautiful speeches as those of Greece. Then they had very fine plays, to which every citizen had a right to go, and festivals with music and dancing and feasting, which also were free to every one. The rich, of course, had splendid entertainments in their own houses, at which music and poetry, flowers and perfumes added to the coarser indulgences of eating and drinking. Never, indeed, was there a country in which there were so many means of pleasure and enjoyment, and this, of course, seems at *first very delightful*; but when we begin

to look a little closer into this fine showy life, we shall find many things to excite sorrow and disgust, and make us heartily glad that we have been born in modern England instead of ancient Greece with all its beauty. I cannot tell you what all these things were; for that you must wait till you read the history of each country for itself; but one circumstance I may mention to give you some idea of what I mean. In that beautiful, refined Athens, the very lowest of whose people considered himself superior to all the rest of the world, and who called all others barbarians, it was still the practice to kill poor little babies as soon as they were born, if the father thought them likely to be troublesome. The nurse who took the baby, used to go and ask him whether it was to be killed, or left in the street, or brought up properly; and he might say just which he pleased. Another very bad thing was, that there were

great numbers of people who lived only by spying out and informing when any one had committed any offence against the laws, and of course men who would do this, would very often pretend that people were guilty who were not. The greatest and best men in Athens were thus very often brought to trial and severely punished on quite false accusations. The very best of all, one named Socrates, who had passed a long life in teaching virtue and wisdom to his countrymen, after fighting bravely for them in his youth, was cruelly condemned to be poisoned, because he was falsely accused by some of these wicked informers. But before this happened, there took place in Greece some very important events which I must tell you of, and which are much pleasanter to hear.

A certain king of Persia, named Darius, had quarrelled with those Greeks who you remember had gone *and settled* in Asia Minor, and built

many fine cities there, because they would be free, and would not do everything he liked. When they were afraid of being overpowered, they applied to their countrymen in Greece to help them; and then King Darius sent a great army into Greece, and thought to do away with that little country altogether. But it is not so easy to conquer people who are brave and determined; and instead of destroying Greece, his own army was destroyed at a great battle on the plains of Marathon, and he lost twenty thousand men, with three hundred ships.

These soldiers of Darius were only mere slaves of a despotic king, who when they fought cared very little whether the battle was lost or not. The Greeks were free men, fighting for everything they held dear in the world, — their beautiful country, their religion, and their homes; so it is not surprising that they gained the victory.

LETTER XVIII.

KING DARIUS of course was terribly angry when he heard of the defeat of his army, and he vowed he would conquer those Greeks; and though it happened that he died before he could make another attempt, his son, the next king, Xerxes, resolved to put his plan in execution. For three years he employed himself in getting ready an immense army; and he was so sure he should win, that when one day somebody brought him some figs from Attica, he said he should not eat them, but wait till Attica was his own, figs and all. He might as well have eaten the figs, however, for Attica never became his own.

Strange things did this King Xerxes say and do in this expedition, if we *may believe* the accounts; and I think

they may be quite true, for people who are always left to their own will, as these kings of Persia were, and have no one ever to contradict them, generally become nearly or quite mad. It is said he talked to a mountain which he had ordered to be cut through, and said, "Mount Athos, I order you not to interrupt my workmen with stones that cannot be cut asunder, or I will cut you in pieces and throw you into the sea." And when, afterwards, a bridge of boats which he had made across the strait of the Hellespont was broken by a storm, he ordered that the sea should be whipped with three hundred lashes, and a pair of fetters thrown into it, and the people who whipped it were to say to it at the same time, "You salt and bitter water, your master is punishing you because you have offended him without provocation. Xerxes the king insists on passing over you; and no one shall offer you a sacrifice be-

cause you are deceitful and of a nasty taste." We afterwards hear, however, that he threw in a golden cup and a Persian sword as offerings before he crossed; so I suppose he was a little afraid of the sea after all, and wanted to make it up. On the shore, before embarking, he was seated on a white marble throne, and held what we should call a review of the almost countless multitudes of men on foot, on horseback, and in chariots, that made up his army: and then, lying on the deck of a Phœnician vessel, under a cloth of gold, he passed through his great fleet, and his pride was quite satisfied, and he felt sure of the victory.

He and his great host moved on without any hindrance, round the northern shore of the Ægean Sea, till they came to the north of Greece, and there, at a narrow passage between high mountains, they found a body of brave men waiting for them: those

who have been best remembered were three hundred Spartans with their king Leonidas. Seeing how few they were, and thinking it quite impossible that they really meant to resist him, Xerxes merely sent forward a messenger to tell the Spartans to deliver up their arms. These Spartans were famous for saying everything as shortly as possible ; and the King Leonidas only answered, "Come and take them." The Persians perhaps began now to find out what sort of men they had to deal with, and they waited several days to see what the Greeks would do ; and in the meantime Xerxes tried if by making grand promises to Leonidas he could induce him to desert the cause of his country, and he offered to make him king of all Greece.

But Leonidas liked a great deal better to die for his country than to be a traitor to it, and he would not for a moment listen to such a proposal. He

had some relations in his little band, however, whom he would gladly have saved from the death which he saw was approaching for them all, and he pretended to have some messages which he wanted them to carry for him. But they guessed what he really wanted, and would not leave him. I think it is worth while to mention this, because it is very beautiful to see any one careful for the safety of others while they are careless of their own. All but two of the brave Spartans were killed, as they expected to be, and the great army of Persia swept on to overwhelm, as they thought, this little country of Greece. But the time during which Leonidas had kept them off had given the rest of the Greeks time to consider what they should do. The Athenians had sent to consult the oracle, and it had answered that they should be safe within "wooden walls." *But, as it generally happened with the*

sayings of the oracles, nobody knew very well what it meant. The city of Athens itself had no walls, but there were round the citadel some wooden palings; and some people thought these were the wooden walls the oracle meant. But one of their greatest men, named Themistocles, said he was sure it meant that they should go on board their ships, which of course were made of wood. At first they did not like to do this, because they would have to leave their beautiful city and most of their property behind them. However, Themistocles thought that was better than to run the risk of being made slaves by the Persians, and that, as the Greeks were better acquainted with the sea than their enemies, they would have a better chance in fighting them by sea than on land. Then he talked in private with the priests of the goddess Athene, the principal deity of the *Athenians*, and the priests told the

people that she would be very angry if they did not go, and that the sacred dragon had refused to eat his cakes, and gone and jumped into the sea; and so, at last, they consented, and went on board the ships, taking whatever they could with them. But now the Athenians found that they had not money enough to get all the things that were wanted, and so Themistocles went into the temple of Athene; he said he was going to look for a shield that had been lost, but, whatever he looked for, we know what he found, for when he came out he had a great deal of money, which he distributed among his countrymen. I dare say he thought, and so do we, that there was no harm in taking it, for the statue of Athene could not have wanted money; but he did not dare tell his countrymen that he had done so, as they would have feared the anger of *the goddess*. Another very right thing

which Themistocles did, was to get the Athenians to send for some of their countrymen back again, whom they had banished for no real good reason; especially one very honourable man, named Aristides, whom people had been jealous of because he was so much praised, though he well deserved to be. But all sorts of little jealousies and grudges against one another, which the Greeks were very apt to feel, were forgotten now that they had before them the great enemy. Every one forgot his own selfish feelings and interests, and thought only of what was good for all. One day, when the Spartans and Athenians were discussing what was to be done, the Spartan commander got into a passion with Themistocles, and was going to strike him with a stick; but Themistocles did not offer to return the blow, or even to defend himself, but said, "Strike me if

you like, but hear what I have got to say." And then the Spartan was ashamed of himself, and listened patiently.

I shall not now attempt to tell you all the plans that were adopted, and which you will read in the history of Greece; but at last there was a grand battle on the sea, in the Gulf of Salamis, in which the Persians lost two hundred ships, and were entirely beaten. This of course encouraged the Greeks very much; and then one victory was gained after another, till King Xerxes was driven back into Asia, and all his immense army mostly destroyed. A grievous thing it was that the foolish ambition of this one man should have occasioned the destruction of thousands of others who were not at all in fault, for they could not help being his soldiers; but one rejoices at the escape of the brave Greeks.

Was it not strange that, some years



afterwards, they began to quarrel among themselves as much as before, and that Themistocles himself was at last banished from Athens? and not altogether without reason either, for his conduct had not always been fair and honest. But you will think it a still stranger thing, and it shows what a brave fellow he was, that, when he was banished from his country, he went straight to Persia, of which he had been the great enemy, and asked permission to live in that country. The same king who had come to Greece was not living now,—it was his successor Artaxerxes; but he too, as well as the other, had been offering large rewards to any one who would kill Themistocles. But now that Themistocles had come to him of his own accord he would not do him any harm, but received him kindly, and gave him the sum of money to live on which he

had offered to have him killed. Afterwards, indeed, he became a wonderfully great favourite with Artaxerxes; who, though Themistocles would not agree to join the Persians in doing any injury to his country, made him a present of three whole cities, as it was said, to furnish him with "meat, bread, and wine." This seems very generous of Artaxerxes; and it was really generous to forgive Themistocles for being his enemy; but we must recollect that when he gave away cities, the king gave away the liberty, the property, and perhaps the lives of his subjects, and these were not his to give away, but only to take care of.

Themistocles lived all the rest of his life in grand state like a Persian nobleman; but, at last, King Artaxerxes, it is said, insisted on his joining in a war against the Greeks; but very shortly afterwards, before the war began, he

died. It is thought he poisoned himself, that he might not be obliged to go and fight against Athens; and he begged that, after he was dead, his body might be carried back to his still dear country.

LETTER XIX.

FOR nearly a hundred and fifty years after this time Greece was the grandest country in the world, the most full of clever people, the busiest, the most beautiful; where all arts flourished, and every sort of knowledge increased as it had never done before. Many of the books then written, though it is nearly two thousand years ago, are still some of the best books that can be got; and the cleverest men of our own time are glad to be able to learn out of them. The temples they built, the statues they made, are finer than anything we can do now, although we have had the advantage of seeing first  what they have done; and the Greeks  everything, as children say, out of

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their own heads. They had, it is true, the beginnings of most of the arts and sciences from Egypt; but they improved them so much, that it was almost as if they had invented them from the first.

There is, indeed, one distinction which I must try and point out to you. There are different kinds of knowledge, or sciences, as we call them. Some can be learned by long, patient, wise *thinking*; others require a great many facts in Nature to be observed. Now, in the first kind, the Greeks, being one of the cleverest nations that ever lived, made so much progress, that nobody has ever been able to get beyond them. In the others, as we have been able to make use of their observations, and of all that have been made since, we have got beyond them. A little child now may easily know many true and wonderful things that the greatest men did not know then; but that is no

merit of his, for he has been told. What the Greeks knew, they found out all for themselves; and it was not till they had discovered the Greek books, and found out what was in them, that the people in this part of the world began to learn many sciences. They have been our teachers, though in many things we can now do more than they could. We have, however, the great advantage of being Christians; and though, perhaps, you may suppose this has nothing to do with knowledge, but only with goodness, you will find, when you are older, and come to study history thoroughly, that it has a great deal to do with it; that it was exactly for want of a better religion, and a better knowledge of what real goodness was, that this glorious country went all to ruin. One cannot help wishing sometimes that it had pleased God to give them *better knowledge*; but He knows best

what is fit to be done. We are too ignorant of the wonderful universe in which He has placed us, and we live too short a time, to be able to judge of what He does to whom we are told "a thousand years is but like one day." We should think it very foolish if a kitten or a canary bird should fancy they could judge of what we do; and yet the difference between the kitten and us, is nothing at all compared with the difference between us and the Almighty.

Well, this hundred and fifty years passed away, — you shall read a more exact account of them by and by; and at the end of this time there is a great change. The king of a country of which you have yet heard nothing, and which was hardly thought worth mentioning by anybody, is now the most powerful man in the world. He is the master of Greece, and of all those *beautiful cities*, of Egypt and Judea,


and Phœnicia and Assyria, and he and his armies have gone on conquering one people after another, till at last it is said, he fairly cried that he could find no more to conquer. It was odd enough though, and it shows how little communication there was between one country and another then, that he had left behind him, only at a few days' journey from the place where he was born, a people as brave and as fond of war as himself, and who would have been quite a match for him. This man was Alexander, king of Macedonia, or, as he is usually called, Alexander the Great, and the people of whom he knew nothing were the Romans, and who not very long afterwards became masters of all the nations he conquered, and many more.

The country of Macedonia was situated to the north of Greece ; it is what is called Roumelia, and is considered to belong to Turkey. It was

peopled probably before Greece, for in the ages before the beginning of history, the people wandering away from the first countries must have reached that before the southern part, where Sparta and Athens stood. But it had remained up to the time of Alexander the Great, or of his father Philip, a half barbarous country that the other Greeks thought beneath their notice.

But Greece was very different now from what it had been. The people were no longer brave and patriotic, able to bear hardship, willing to sacrifice themselves as Leonidas and many others had done, and defy danger and death in the cause of their country. They were over fond of luxury and all kinds of pleasure; they would do the wickedest things for the sake of it; they were jealous and envious of one another, and always quarrelling, which indeed they had been in their best times. They were not now fit to be

freemen, for they did not make a good use of their freedom; and so it happened, as it always does, that they lost it, and they were never free again. If the Greeks could have all joined together heartily, as they did when the Persian king attacked them, most likely neither Alexander the Great nor any other could have conquered them; but instead of that, they fought one against another, and some called in the king of Macedon to help them (that was King Philip, the father of Alexander), and he flattered them, and made them presents, and then he persuaded them to go with him and attack Persia, though none of the Persians then alive had been doing them the least harm. But, just as they were going to set out on this war, King Philip of Macedon died. He was murdered, — murdered by the order of his own wife, and without his son trying to prevent it.

 *This was the beginning of the reign .*

of Alexander the Great, as they call him; and after such a beginning, we are not surprised to find what the reign was, — nothing but war and shedding of blood. What we are rather surprised at is, that this Alexander really had, with all his great faults, some signs of good in him. We must always recollect, too, in judging of him, that he had been brought up to imagine that glory as it is called, — that is, the making himself talked about as much as possible, — was the finest thing in the world, and what every man ought to try to get. He was seen to cry when he was a boy, it is said, when he heard of victories gained by his father, who saw what his temper was, and used to say that Macedon would not be a large enough kingdom for his son Alexander. And so it proved; for as soon as ever he became king, he attacked all the nations round *him, and as he was a very clever sol-*

dier indeed, soon conquered them ; and then he went on to Asia, followed by armies of Greeks who chose to call him only their general, or commander in chief ; though every one knew very well that he was really master of Greece, and could do as he pleased with it. He conquered Syria and Palestine, and besieged the famous city of Tyre, the inhabitants of which defended themselves bravely for seven months, but they were taken at last, and treated with savage cruelty. Then he went on to Egypt, which submitted to him at once without any resistance ; and so, as he had no fighting to do, he began the only work of his of which anything is left, — that is, the city of Alexandria in Egypt, which still exists. He chose a very good situation for it, and it was very useful to the country, as Egypt before that had no good sea-port, to which foreign ships *might* come with goods. You know I


told you that the ancient Egyptians hated the sea, and would have nothing to do with it.

This was one of many occasions on which Alexander showed, that if he had not been perpetually at war, he might have governed very well; he often knew better what was good for the countries he conquered than any one else: but though he might make plans, he had no time to execute them, as he was constantly fighting; and if ever he did any reasonable and wise thing, he was sure to go and do something foolish afterwards. Now, for instance, after he had planned the city of Alexandria, he undertook a toilsome journey across the desert of Libya to a temple of Jupiter that stood there, only to make the priests declare that he was not a man, but a god, and worship him. In the following spring, he left Egypt, and marched to the river *Euphrates*, and attacked the Persians.

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There was a great battle, which they lost; and their king Darius had to make his escape, while Alexander took possession of the finest part of his country, like a great robber as he was. Alexander followed him, and they fought again; but Darius was again defeated, and then some of his own subjects rebelled against him, and murdered him.

After this, Alexander heard that there was a great and fertile country to the south-east,—that is, India,—and he resolved to go and conquer that. He did march as far as the river Indus, and beyond it to the country we now call the Punjaub; but then his soldiers, wearied with the long painful journies and seemingly endless hardships to which they were exposed, became discontented, and at last refused to go any further. It is but fair to say that Alexander always took his full share of all *the sufferings* to which he exposed his



armies. Often when they were exposed to terrible heat from the sun, he would dismount from his horse and march in his armour at the head of his foot soldiers; and one day, it is said, when they were all half dead with thirst in the desert, a little water was procured,—just enough for one person,—and brought to the king. But he said he would have no relief in which all his soldiers could not share; and, seizing the helmet, he poured the water on the ground.

He fought one more battle, before he left this country, with an Indian king, and was victorious, as usual; and then, most unwillingly, he turned back; but before he went he set up some monuments of his victories, on which he put inscriptions praying the gods never to allow any mortal to do more than he had done; and then he turned back, and at last got to Babylon with all *that was left of his brave army.* The

greater part of them had died of their wounds, or of fatigue on the road. But conquerors never think or care much about these things; indeed, as soon as he got to Babylon, he began to lay plans for still greater conquests,—for sailing all round Africa, as it was said the Phœnicians had already done (though they kept it secret), and of making himself the king of what he believed to be the whole world. By this time he had grown almost mad with the perpetual indulgence of his pride; and when one of his old companions refused to flatter him as he expected, Alexander fell into such a fury that he stabbed him dead. He was not so bad but that he grieved afterwards very much for what he had done; but that did not bring his friend to life again. His sorrow and his anger, his pride and his triumph, however, all soon came to an end; for he died at Babylon, after a grand banquet, when he was only

thirty-two years old, and the great empire which he had set up fell to pieces as if it had been a house of cards. His death was occasioned, some people said, by poison; others thought it was from the effects of drinking an excessive quantity of wine. The exact truth about it is not known. His generals parted his territories among them, and, of course, quarrelled and fought about their portions.

Was it not a pity that such a very brave and very clever man should have been of no use to himself or anybody else?

LETTER XX.

WE will pass over between two and three hundred years, during which scarcely anything is to be heard of but war and devastation and bloodshed, and we come to another scene of the grand panorama of history. The great Roman Empire has been established, and now at last there is peace for a time.

The city of Rome, which a few hundred years ago was a small town or village of cottages built of reeds and straw, is now the ruler of the world, or at least of all of the world that the Romans know of or think worth ruling. Since the time when the Gauls burnt Rome, there have been, without counting *little ones*, three tremendous wars,

called the Punic Wars, carried on with a once powerful people, the Carthaginians, whose chief city was Carthage, on the coast of Africa. They had come first as emigrants from Phœnicia, and, like the Phœnicians, were great trading people and clever sailors, and there was plenty of room for them and the Romans too, if they would have traded comfortably together, instead of fighting. But they were not wise enough to do this, and so now at last the Romans had entirely destroyed their fine city of Carthage, and taken possession of all the rest of the Carthaginian territories, and all the northern part of Africa, and Egypt, and Judea, and all the countries that Alexander the Great had conquered, and besides all these Spain and Portugal, all Italy of course, and great part of Germany, and France, and England (Gaul and Britain they were called then), which Alexander never saw nor heard of.

After they had conquered all these countries, there were dreadful civil wars,—that is, wars among the citizens of Rome themselves, — to settle which of the powerful men among them was to be at the head of these immense dominions. One great general, named Julius Cæsar, had nearly gained this grand prize as they thought it, when he was murdered by several of the Roman nobles, who set upon him all at once, and the chief of whom was a man whom Julius Cæsar had always considered as his true friend, a man named Marcus Brutus. He said he did not do it because he was jealous of Cæsar, as some people said he did, but because he was afraid if Cæsar made himself emperor, it would be such a bad thing for Rome.

This might be true, perhaps; but if it was, he made a most terrible mistake, as people always do when they do *what they know* to be very wrong, in

hopes that some good will afterwards come of it.

When Julius Cæsar had been killed, there were more horrid civil wars, and after all there was an emperor; for Augustus Cæsar, the nephew of Julius, a much worse man, and not nearly so clever a one, got the better of all his rivals, and became the master of the Roman Empire, whose boundaries were now the Atlantic Ocean on the west, the river Euphrates on the east, the rivers Danube and Rhine on the north, and the great desert of Africa on the south. The countries that lay beyond these boundaries,—as, for instance, the mountains of Norway, the northern parts of Scotland, the forests and marshes of the north of Germany,—they did not think it worth their while to take; and so at last, as I have said, there was peace, for there was no nation left that could at all contend with *Rome*.

In the life of Julius Cæsar, there was one circumstance particularly interesting to us. He was the first civilised man we know of who visited England, and it was he who wrote the only account we have of what England was at that time.

England, France, Spain, and some other parts of Europe, were inhabited then by the people called Celts, most likely the first who ever lived in them. These all appear to have come from some distant Eastern country, as of course we should have supposed they must have done, since we know the first inhabitants of the earth lived there. The kind of religion they had, the manners of their priests called Druids, their great numbers, the power they exercised over the people, and many of their ceremonies, remind us very much of Egypt, and were not at all like what we find among most *savages*. The war-chariots of the an-

cient Britons were just like what were used in the most ancient Eastern countries, and were so much more cleverly made than anything else they had, that it always seemed to me that the knowledge of how to make them must have been preserved among them by tradition, from those remote times, when their ancestors left the civilised countries of the East.

In most things the Celtic people of England were mere savages, living by hunting wild beasts, which were plentiful enough, I dare say; for the greater part of England was covered with forest, like what the farthest parts of North America are now. Along the southern and part of the eastern coast they were indeed rather more civilised, for they had large flocks and herds, and knew how to cultivate the ground and make corn grow; but they were very rude and ignorant, went nearly naked, had no houses, but little huts made of dried

mud and straw. As you will, however, read all about them in the History of England, I shall say very little here.

The Britons made a very brave resistance to the Roman soldiers, but they were sure to be beaten, because the Romans were quite as brave, and at this time a great deal more knowing, and I am not sure it was the worse for the Britons in the end. Julius Cæsar's first coming to England was fifty-five years before the most important event that ever happened in the world—the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, and Augustus Cæsar became Emperor of Rome thirty years before it; consequently, as Augustus reigned forty-four years, it happened fourteen years before the end of his reign.

The city of Rome that is now, is not more than a third part as large as it was in the time of Augustus Cæsar. It seems to be quite up in a corner of *the space* filled by the old city; and

from the immense numbers of buildings that have been destroyed in it, the ground has been raised fifteen feet, so that some of the temples to which the old Romans had to go up a high flight of steps, people now have to dig down into the ground to get at, and many statues have been found buried quite deep in the ground, which were at first merely thrown down. The quantities of ruins have made it seem as if the ground had grown up round them.

The houses of the Romans were, as I have said, at first mere cottages, thatched with straw; but about three hundred years afterwards the town was burnt by the Gauls; and when it was built up again, the houses were made of brick and wood, but the streets were narrow and irregular; and it was not till the greater part of it had been burnt a second time that it was built in a handsome manner. After this the *great houses* were built apart. Each had

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a vestibule, or a space before the gate, through which people entered, and a portico. In the golden palace of the Emperor Nero, the vestibule was so large that it contained three porticos of a mile long each, and a pond like a great lake. At the door of the house itself, it was usual to place a slave, who acted as porter, but who was chained up like a dog. Through this principal door people entered a hall, where the mistress of the family and her maid-servants used, in the old times, to sit spinning and weaving, though afterwards the Roman women left off doing that, and indeed almost everything that was useful. A fire was kept constantly burning near the gate; and in this hall the family used to take their principal meal. Here, too, the nobility placed the statues of their ancestors, and whatever books or pictures they had; and sometimes it served at the same time for the kitchen, which must have

made it rather uncomfortable, for the Romans, with all their splendour, did not know how to make chimneys ; and there was no other window than an opening at the top, like what we now call a sky-light, except that it let in the rain, as it had no glass. There were separate rooms for sleeping in at night, and some for sleeping in during the day, and one called a solarium for basking in the sun. The floors and walls of the rooms were made with small pieces of marble of different colours, curiously joined together, such as we now call mosaic ; and there were rich curtains and plenty of couches, for at the principal meal, which was the supper, people lay down instead of sitting to eat, as we do, and rested on their elbows on pillows and cushions. They did not do so in the old times, but only when they got so rich and lazy, that they did not know what to do with themselves.

But it was in their country-houses or villas that the magnificence of the Romans was mostly displayed. The word villa originally meant a farm-house, with all the buildings to accommodate the master and all his labourers, as well as for storing corn and fruit and wine, and keeping all kinds of poultry and domestic animals; but afterwards they had also dining-rooms and parlours, or rooms to receive strangers, and baths and gardens, and terraces and parks in the grandest style, decorated with the most beautiful statues, and immense ponds for fish of the most costly kinds. The streets of old Rome were not, I believe, so broad and regular as our best streets, but the numbers of most magnificent public buildings were such as no city in the world can now show. There were four hundred large and small temples; and the entrance to the most celebrated, *that of Jupiter* on the hill of the Capitol,

was reached by a hundred broad steps. The doors and the roof were almost covered with plates of gold. The splendid palaces and villas of the rich citizens, in the midst of beautiful gardens, lay scattered all over the country about Rome, which now looks almost like a desert. There was the great Circus for horse and chariot-races, which was a mile round; we hear of a theatre adorned with three thousand Greek statues, and the immense amphitheatre, called the Coliseum, of which we have something more to say, and altogether it must have been a most superb looking place.

LETTER XXI.

THE being constantly engaged in war had, of course, a very bad effect on the character of the Roman people; and when they had no longer any enemies to plunder and kill, they began to exhibit among themselves at home the same fierceness and covetousness that they had before shown towards other nations. The officers of the army came back from their victories with immense riches, and bought up the small portions of land belonging to the poorer citizens, and so got together great estates, which they had cultivated by hundreds and thousands of slaves. The citizens who had lost their land would not practise any trade, for this was *only* done by slaves, but they went and

lived lazily on what some rich man would give them in return for their voting for him; for even if they were beggars in rags, who could not get their own living, if they were Roman citizens they could vote for who should be made a general, a governor of a province, a consul, or any other officer of government. Of course, fellows who would live in that way cared much more to vote for the one who would give them most money, than for the one who was the best man and most fit for the place. Among these idlers were also great numbers of those who had been soldiers, and who neither knew nor wished to know any other occupation. They could live without any work; for it was the practice to distribute food to the populace, and moreover to make all kinds of shows to amuse them. The Emperors were very willing to do this, for they did not care how *much money they spent, as it all came*

from conquered nations; and they thought, if they kept the Roman people fed and amused, they would not notice how badly they governed the country.


Most of the amusements of the Romans were of a very brutal kind. They did not care for poetry and music as the Greeks did, and very little for dancing and wrestling. What they liked best was to see hundreds of men fighting, stabbing, and killing each other, or torn to pieces by wild beasts let loose upon them. The vast building called the Coliseum, which, though in ruins, is still to be seen in Rome, was an amphitheatre where these dreadful and disgusting diversions were carried on. It was large enough to hold more than a hundred thousand people, and there were seats for ninety thousand, rising one above another to the top of the immense building. In the middle was the arena, where the fighting went on, thickly

strewn with sand to soak up the blood with which it was often drenched. At first, only criminals and other prisoners fought, but afterwards men called gladiators were regularly trained for the purpose. They were brought in two by two, and the rule was for them to fight till one fell. Then the victor appealed to the audience whether the fallen man should be killed, and sometimes the poor bleeding and exhausted creature himself stretched out his hand to implore their mercy. But they had no mercy, and they mostly gave the sign for his death by holding up their thumbs, when the adversary plunged his sword into him; and then men came with iron hooks and dragged out the body into a place made for the purpose, and another pair of victims was brought in. The more dreadful were the wounds and the slaughter, the more the spectators — men, women, and children — rejoiced.

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All round the Coliseum were vaults or dens, in which the wild beasts used to be kept, and just above them the cells in which the unfortunate prisoners who were to be torn to pieces by them were shut up. For days and nights together they could hear the roarings of these dreadful neighbours.

It is not at all surprising to those who know anything of human nature, that, while the Romans were thus cruel, they were, at the same time, immoderately luxurious, and fond of indulging themselves in all kinds of animal pleasures, — the most extravagant in their dress and way of living, the greatest gluttons and the greatest drunkards, that have ever been heard of. They would spend sums of money that we should even now think almost a fortune, at a single grand dinner; and they would send to all parts of the world for the sake of procuring what they thought nice to eat, and then



eat such enormous quantities of these dainties that almost the whole time and skill of the doctors were spent in contriving ways to prevent their killing themselves with eating. The stories that are told of their gluttony are such as it would make me sick to repeat. As an instance, I will just mention that it was actually a common practice, when at great banquets they had eaten till they could eat no more, to go out and take an emetic, and then come back and eat again. But I shall say no more of these disgusting things; there are plenty of Latin books that will tell you about them if you should ever wish to know more; and it does not much matter that you cannot read them now. As to the dress of the Romans, there was no end of their expensive decorations, for men as well as for women. There was Julius Cæsar, whom we know as a brave warrior and a very clever man, when he was young

was, it is said, such a dandy that he used to sit for hours having his hair oiled and curled by the slave whose business it was; and we hear of an orator named Hortensius, who would quite scream if anybody in a crowd ran against his toga, and put it out of the becoming folds he had laid it in.

As for the Roman ladies, as they had less to do than the men, they were still more foolish about their dress, and, what was worse, they used to inflict the cruellest punishments upon their slaves who made the least mistake about their finery; they would sometimes change their dresses ten times during an entertainment, and they had even their shoes covered with jewels. I believe it was the having so many slaves that, more than anything else, made them so bad as they were; for in the early times of the Roman republic, when they had no slaves, the Roman women were very different.

The number of slaves in Rome was enormous; for, besides the hundreds that were kept in great houses to perform all kinds of services for their lazy and luxurious masters and mistresses, the whole work of the country was done by them: the tradesmen, the artisans, musicians, and even doctors, of Rome were slaves, and by their talents earned a great deal of money, which their masters might take from them whenever they liked. As to the slaves who cultivated the ground, it is terrible to think how they were treated. They used not only often to be chained to the implements they had to use, but even at night to be chained to the places where they slept. We hear on one occasion, in Sicily, of some slaves breaking loose at night, and setting free others to the number of seventy thousand, who then made regular war on the Romans, and kept it up for three years.

LETTER XXII.

I HAVE said it was very bad, not only for the countries governed by the Roman Emperors, but for the Roman Emperors themselves, that they were quite despotic, that is, were under no restraint, and could do whatever they pleased. Every one who thinks of it, must know that it is bad for any human creature to be able to do whatever he pleases; but, perhaps, we should hardly have known how bad it was, if it had not been for the example of these Roman Emperors, who, I suppose, had their own will more than anybody else ever had. We have despotic kings and emperors now, for instance, the Emperor of Russia, but that is still a very different case.

There are other sovereigns who are his equals, and who hear of all that he does, and he would not like that they should think quite too ill of him. People whom he might try to ill-use could also often get away into other countries, and then they would not care for him ; then he has been taught the Christian religion, though, perhaps, not quite in the best way ; and the worst Christian, I think, could not do such things as these Roman Emperors used to do without being ashamed at all. They had no equals in the whole world, to judge of their actions: the bad and foolish religion of heathen Rome was no restraint upon their wickedness ; if they ill-used any one, it was hardly possible for him to get away from their dominions, for you know they extended over nearly all Europe, and more than Europe. All the people whom they lived with, were in the habit of constantly flattering

them, for they were the absolute masters of every body, could make them rich or poor, could send them to prison, or kill them, if they liked, and no one would interfere. In the reign of Augustus it was not yet quite so bad. The Romans had not yet got used to being so mean and servile as they afterwards became. Augustus, when he had only lately become Emperor, thought it likely the people would not let him remain so, and tried to behave tolerably well, so as to please them. He had some great sorrows, too. Some of his nearest relations behaved very badly indeed, and there were during his reign some public misfortunes that every Roman was grieved at. One Roman army was lost in the Arabian deserts, and another was cut to pieces in the forests of Germany.

Beyond the Danube and the Rhine lay a vast unknown wild country, of *which* no one then knew the size or the

limits, inhabited by different tribes of savages, with tall, large figures, blue eyes, and red hair, called the Germans. From Switzerland to the shores of the Baltic Sea was one great forest, that it took sixty days to travel through. It was then a very cold country, much colder than it is now; for it is always found that, when countries come to be cultivated, their climate becomes pleasanter: the rivers froze over every year, and bears and elks and other animals, which are now found only near the North Pole, were then seen about the Rhine and the Maine. I have called the inhabitants of Germany at that time savages, because they went nearly naked, and had no towns or regular houses, and knew nothing of reading or writing, or any of the arts, but they were much superior to most of the races that we now call so. They cultivated the ground a little, and grew corn, not wheat, which is the best, but oats and

barley, that will do to make a coarse kind of bread; but they had no fruit-trees, no vines, no gardens, nothing but a few little patches of cultivated ground, and all the rest of the country was wild mountains and thick woods, and marsh and heath.

When Julius Cæsar had conquered Gaul, he began to fight with these wild Germans: and after his death Drusus, the step-son of the Emperor Augustus, went with an army in small ships or boats down the river Rhine, towards the sea; and as he went along, he built here and there a fort, or strong house, for soldiers, and it was on these spots that some of the fine German cities were afterwards built. After Drusus died there came to Germany another Roman general, Tiberius (who was afterwards Emperor); and then one named Varus, and by this time it was thought that the Germans were entirely *beaten*. But this was a great mistake; *they had been before quite free men,*

and when they found the Romans meant to make slaves of them, they all joined together (which they very seldom did), and got a great chief, named Arminius, to command them: then they set upon the Roman soldiers all at once, and had a dreadful battle that lasted three days; and though the Romans wore strong iron armour, and had good swords and other weapons, and were much more skilful in fighting than their adversaries, the Germans fought so desperately, that at last they gained a complete victory. Scarcely ever before had the Romans been so defeated. You will recollect the date of this event: it was about the same time as the birth of our Saviour, almost four thousand years after the beginning of the human race, and 753 after the first building of Rome.

The Emperor Augustus was certainly a bad man, for he was willing to commit *almost any crime* for the sake of

obtaining the throne; but after he was once sure of his power, he does not seem, on the whole, to have behaved very badly. He was not cruel or insolent to those about him, and he was so unhappy in his own family, that we at last forget what he had done wrong in pity for his sorrows. He had no sons; and three fine young men, his grandsons, whom he was very fond of, all died one after the other, or, what is most likely, were poisoned by his second wife, a wicked woman, named Livia, and her son Tiberius, who wished to make himself Emperor. His dear and beautiful daughter Julia, too, was persecuted by these two, and driven into exile, and at last the Emperor died, at the age of seventy-six, almost broken-hearted, though he had succeeded in all his ambitious schemes, and been the greatest man in the world for more than forty years.


He had been somehow obliged to

name as his successor this step-son Tiberius, though he did not like him at all; and, indeed, he and every one who came near him had but too much reason to dislike and to dread Tiberius, for he was one of the very wickedest men that ever lived; such a tyrant, that he used to have people killed for saying even in their own houses a few words against him—so cruel, that he seemed to take an actual pleasure in putting people to death—and so hypocritical, that very often he would receive them in the most friendly manner as his guests, and, while they were with him, write an order for their immediate murder.

It was during the reign of this Tiberius that the events took place which are related in the four Gospels of the New Testament. These, as you most likely know, are four different accounts of the life of Jesus Christ. The events they relate are not much spoken of

by the writers of the time, for people little thought that these things were really of far more consequence than all the wars and victories of the great empire of Rome ; that they were to change the whole world, while the Roman Empire was to pass away like the scene of a play.

The reigns of the three Emperors who came after Tiberius, and who were all of the family of Cæsar, are filled with little else than crimes and horrors, so I shall say little of them. Their names were Caligula, Claudius, and Nero. They were all among the worst men who have ever lived, and they were the masters of millions and millions of people, and had nothing to restrain their will. All that we can say to lessen our detestation of them is, that at last they were undoubtedly mad; but they became mad in consequence of their boundless self-indulgence, and giving way to all their pas-



sions. Nero appears to have been at first only a weak, vain man, without very much harm in him. He was only a boy of seventeen when he became Emperor, and people used to tell stories of his mildness and goodness, and repeat the fine speeches he had made about virtue. I don't think, indeed, that this was a very good sign, for those who talk a great deal about virtue seldom do much.

But he became much worse when flatterers came about him, and indulged all his evil propensities and his foolish vanity. He used to go and dance upon the public stage, and insist on being paid very highly for his performance, and would even put people to death for not applauding him. He set fire to the city of Rome for his amusement, and would not let any one try to put it out, so that it burnt for a week together, and thousands of people *had no home to go to*. He murdered

his brother, his sister, his mother—but let us say no more about him, or those who were like him. We must not, indeed, always shrink from the pain of thinking or hearing of wicked people; any more than, when we see a frightful object, we must shut our eyes and run away. It is better to go up to it, and find out what it is, and in the same way it is very necessary to know what our nature may become, if we do not take care to guard against its evil propensities. These Roman Emperors were once innocent babies, and nothing we can learn is of more importance than by what means it happened that they grew up to be what they were afterwards. Such questions, however, are much too difficult for young people; and I shall, therefore, say no more than I can help of the monstrous wickedness of which we hear so much in history. Sometimes *we might almost think all mankind were wicked*; but we must recollect,

for our comfort, that the wicked people mostly come to be talked about and known, whilst the good, who do their duty quietly, are kind and loving to their friends, and are happy themselves, and make others so, are seldom known but to a few people, unless they happen to be born in a high station.

God, who sees all hearts, and knows what is going on in everybody's home, sees, I do not doubt, even in the worst times many good, noble, beautiful actions, that no human being but the person who does them, or his intimate friends, knows any thing about, or ever will.

It is quite certain, nevertheless, that some times are worse than others, that there are more bad people and fewer good; and the period at which we have now arrived, and for several hundred years afterwards, does certainly appear to be one of those in which the civi-

lised nations of the earth were, in general, as bad as they could be.

Yet, as that time of night is the darkest which is just before the morning dawn, — so in this most gloomy age the religion began to be taught which has effected so great a change, and which is intended, we hope, with God's blessing, to effect still more in future, and to make the world far better, wiser, and happier than we have ever yet seen it. Let us all try and get the comfort of thinking, before we die, that we have done something, however little, to forward that happy time.

It was in the reign of the fourth Emperor, Claudius, that the grand attack was made by the Romans upon Britain, which ended in the Romans getting possession of the country, though the Britons, nearly naked as *they* were, and with defences made *only* of wood, leather, or wicker-work,

made a desperate resistance to the Romans with their strong iron armour and terrible weapons. A brave British king, named Caractacus, and his wife and daughter, were, you may recollect, taken and brought as prisoners to Rome during the war.

LETTER XXIII.

DURING the reigns of these four dreadful Emperors, the simple but noble-minded men whom Jesus had chosen for his disciples, and others whom they again had taught, had been going on quietly preaching to all the people that would hear them the truths of religion, and, what was more than any preaching, showing in their lives examples of the purest virtue and goodness. By degrees, the officers of the Roman government began to take notice of what a change was made in the behaviour of those who had become Christians, and they observed that the people no longer came, as they used to do, to the heathen temples, to *worship the idols* and bring presents

for the priests, or what were called sacrifices to the gods — Jupiter and Venus, and the rest of them.

After a time the governors became angry, and insisted that they should come and worship the images, and, what was worse, say shameful, blasphemous things of their Divine Master, Jesus! This they refused to do. They had always been quite quiet and obedient to the government, gentle and affectionate among themselves, sharing with each other all that they had, and modest and humble in their behaviour, so that the Roman governors thought they could easily frighten them. But this was quite a mistake. The early Christians, though they were as gentle as doves, had the courage of lions. They cared very little about pleasing the Roman governors, in comparison with pleasing God, and they would submit to torture *and death* rather than do what they

thought wrong. Some of them, indeed, did more than their duty required. They seemed as if they were actually eager to be put to death, and almost forced the magistrates to take notice of their behaviour, even when they would have spared them. I suppose they were weary of a world where they saw so much wickedness going on, and longed too impatiently to be in Heaven among the blessed angels.

Well, if they did, they soon had what they wanted, for the most cruel persecution of the Christians began to be practised. Under the reign of Nero, they were punished and put to death in all sorts of dreadful ways; crucified, burnt, thrown to wild beasts. Hundreds and thousands of the most innocent and virtuous people then living on the earth were dragged to the dungeons of that horrid Coliseum, and afterwards torn to pieces on the blood-stained arena, — to make a holiday

amusement for the Romans and their monster of an emperor.

But the more Christians were killed, the more there seemed to be of them. People saw that it must be a very different religion from any they had ever heard of before, that could make those who belonged to it so virtuous in their lives, and so heroic in their death ; and more and more of the inhabitants of the Roman Empire, secretly or openly, began to inquire about Jesus Christ, and to confess themselves his followers.

This went on for above three hundred years, — silently, but without ever stopping. Sometimes there was, for a few years, a dreadful persecution of the Christians, and cruelties took place that would make you shudder to hear ; and then, perhaps, for a long time little notice seemed to be taken of them. A great deal depended, as in *despotically* governed countries

it always must, upon the will and the character of the Emperor and his officers.

During this time there had been a great number of Emperors, and, what you will, perhaps, be surprised to hear, some among them very good as well as clever men. We may wish to remember the names of some of these;—they were, Nerva, Trajan, Marcus Aurelius, Antoninus Pius, and a few others. These had not been brought up like the Cæsars, to expect to be Emperors, and did not become so till they were old enough for their characters to be settled. They had not been accustomed from their infancy to be flattered and spoiled, and to see all the foolishness and wickedness of a most corrupt and licentious court. The Emperors who were what was called “born in the purple,” were always the worst. This phrase, I may *mention*, meant born as princes, be-

cause "purple," which is the colour we now call crimson, was considered especially proper for kings, and so it has been ever since. But even under the most virtuous Emperors, the Roman Empire seemed to be getting worse and worse. Indulging themselves in all that they thought pleasure, till at last they lost all power of enjoying anything, lazy, effeminate, and afraid both of the trouble and the danger of war, the Roman citizens had now lost the only virtue they had had left, that of bravery ; and they not only left all the work of the world to be done by slaves, but hired the barbarians, as they called them, of Britain, Gaul, and Germany to do their fighting. But when these brave barbarians found out what cowards the Romans were, they lost the awe they used to have of the Roman name, and they began to cross the frontiers of the Empire, and take possession of some

of the provinces. Considering what the Roman Empire was, one is glad it should go down, and by the year 300 (after Christ) it did seem to be going down fast enough.

In the last hundred years there had been so many Emperors that one is tired of counting them. Most of them were set up by the soldiers, who generally took the one that would pay them most, — and then after a few months pulled him down again, and murdered him. Very few, indeed, out of the long list, died any other way than by murder. Some of them were nearly idiots — some madmen — many more like ferocious wild beasts — or so given up to vice, that the least glimpse of their lives is enough. One would be ashamed to look any closer at them, and I think it is almost a pity some of them have been written. Sometimes there were two — sometimes four — at *one time six*, Emperors reigning in dif-

ferent places, the barbarians all the while coming in on all sides, and every thing in the most complete confusion.

About the year 306 a great event took place — what is generally called a great triumph for Christianity, — but I cannot say I think so. The Roman Emperor Constantine himself became a Christian — or rather called himself so, probably because he thought that the Christians, who were now very numerous in all parts of the Empire, would then support him against the rivals who were contending with him for the throne. Of course, we cannot always tell what people's motives are, but he was so bad a man that I think he could not be in his heart a Christian. Instead of altering his conduct to suit what Christianity told him was right, he tried to make Christianity suit his conduct, and mixed up with it so much of the old heathenism that it became *less and less* like the divine religion of

Jesus Christ. He introduced showy ceremonies, splendid processions, the burning of incense, and many other such things, which the Christians had always disliked, because they were in use in the temples of the false gods. He built grand churches, and gave the Christian clergymen high titles and much money, — but went on with his wicked actions, killing all his rivals, and even his own relations when they were in his way. This Constantine is generally called Constantine the Great — and if by that word nothing is meant but clever, perhaps he may have some claim to it. But if we talk of true greatness, he was very little; for he was always looking after his own worldly interest, without caring for any thing else, and that is what the meanest of mankind can do.

Among many changes which he made in the Empire, the most remarkable one was the moving the govern-

ment from Rome to the city then called Byzantium, but since Constantinople. A most beautiful and advantageous place it was for a great city, perhaps the finest in the world ; but it is of far more consequence what the people are who live in a city, than what the city is in itself, and the people of Constantinople do not seem to have been ever much benefited by its fine situation.

LETTER XXIV.

THE countries now called Hungary and Bohemia, and Poland and Russia, were in the time of the Roman Empire scarcely ever visited. All that was known about their inhabitants was, that they were wild people, having no settled place to live in, but only tents, which they were constantly moving about, and that they had herds of cattle, on the milk and flesh of which they subsisted, just as the Tartars in Middle Asia do now. As they had nothing worth taking, and their countries were mostly very disagreeable to live in, the Romans did not interfere much with them, and the barbarians were for a *long* time too much afraid of the *Romans* to think of coming into their do-

minions. There were many different tribes of these people, who had, of course, different names (some of them very hard ones), but the principal were the Vandals and the Goths, especially the last, who were spread over a great extent of country, from the Danube to the Baltic Sea.

All at once, about the year 370, there began to be a great stir among all these barbarous tribes, and they came thronging closer than they had ever done before to the Roman territories. They told strange stories of some new terrible-looking men, that had come storming down upon them in immense swarms from the highlands of Asia. They described them as so ugly that they scarcely looked like human beings at all; their faces, it was said, were broad flat lumps of flesh, with little eyes, scarcely any noses but great nostrils, short strong thick-set *figures*, and bow legs, and that they

were fierce and cruel, and delighted in shedding blood. These were the Huns, whom the writers of those times describe very much as giants and ogres are described in the fairy stories ;— indeed, it is curious enough, that this very word ogre was the name of one of these tribes,— with just a little difference in the spelling. Their name, I believe, was Ogur, and it shows what a dread people must have had of them, that they came to use it for the horrid ogres of the tales I have mentioned.

These Huns, who were all mounted on swift horses, came sweeping down upon the Goths, who lived to the north of the river Danube, just beyond the Roman provinces. The Goths, to get out of their way, hurried into the Roman territories ; and other tribes— Alans, Franks, Vandals, Saxons, and many others, — in countless numbers *kept crowding on and on*, as if there was *no end of them*, into Germany, France,

Spain, Italy, and even over the Straits of Gibraltar into Africa. The wild Scots and Picts at the same time came pouring down from the mountains of Scotland into England, which had now been for a long while governed by the Romans, so that the people had got out of the habit of helping themselves and fighting their own battles, and were dreadfully harassed by these war-like savages; and when the Roman Emperor sent for his soldiers out of Britain, the Britons, you know, begged that they would come back again.

Was not this a change from the time when the Britons had fought so desperately to keep the Romans out? They had learned a great many things from their clever Roman masters; but they had lost much of their old brave spirit. When the Romans would not come they sent over to Denmark and Germany, to ask some tribes called the

Angles and Saxons to come and help them to drive out the Picts and Scots. And the Angles and Saxons did come, and they did drive out the Picts and Scots; but when they saw what a good, pleasant country England was, they would not go away again, but took possession of a great deal of the land, and made themselves very comfortable, and drove away the Britons.

But though the Britons, when the Romans first left them,—not being accustomed to depend upon themselves,—had, as I have said, felt frightened, and asked for assistance from the Angles and Saxons, they soon recovered their natural courage; and when more swarms of Angles and Saxons, besides Danes, Juts, Prussians, and I don't know how many more, kept crowding over, the Britons resisted, and fought their invaders valiantly for more than a hundred years. This was more than the *people* of Gaul, Spain, or Italy had

done, when the barbarians came to them. At last, however, the Britons were overpowered by the numbers of their enemies : some took refuge in Wales ; some, in Cornwall ; some went over to Gaul, and settled in the part afterwards called Brittany or Bretagne ; and some few remained and became mixed with their conquerors, or became their slaves.

It is supposed that the behaviour of the first Saxons in Britain must have been still more mischievous and destructive than that of the Vandals and Huns in other places ; for it is well known that the Romans, when they had the country, had built numbers of towns, temples, palaces, and fine works, of which not the least trace was afterwards to be found. The barbarians must have destroyed them all.

The last Emperor who ruled over the whole Roman Empire, was one *known as Theodosius the Great, who*

was a better and cleverer man than most of them had been, and who died in 394. After his death the Empire was divided between his two sons. Arcadius, a lad of eighteen, was to be Emperor of the East, and reign at Constantinople : Honorius, the younger, a boy of only eleven, was to be Emperor of the West, and reign at Rome ; but a guardian was appointed for him, who of course was the real ruler. But as soon as Theodosius, whom the Goths had been rather afraid of, was dead, they made another grand rush at the Roman dominions ; and a great chief or king of theirs, named Alaric, with thousands of his followers, overran all Greece, killing, burning, plundering, and destroying, through all those beautiful Greek cities. Then they crossed over into Italy, and came down like a pack of wolves upon Rome. *Here they were joined by thousands of barbarians of different nations who had*

been unjustly and cruelly treated by the Romans. The city of Rome had at this time more than a million of inhabitants, but they do not seem to have made any attempt to fight Alaric and his Goths; but they offered him immense quantities of silver and gold if he would move off, which, in about a week, he did, and, as it happened, he died before the end of the year.

But his death only made room for another still more terrible enemy, — Attila, king of the Huns, the King of Kings he called himself, who had conquered all the country, from the river Wolga in Russia, quite to the borders of France. In all this wide domain there was not one town; but somewhere in Hungary there was a large irregular cluster of huts of mud and reeds, and some few, I believe, of wood. The one we must call the palace of Attila was surrounded by a high

strong paling, and inside there was plenty of coarse feasting, and rude play, and gold and silver, and dirt, as well as a great number of slaves and wives, all belonging to King Attila. And to this savage chief all the most civilised parts of Europe now had to pay tribute. In the Eastern Empire he had destroyed more than seventy cities; and then the Emperor offered him a great tract of fine land, and two thousand pounds' weight of gold, and six thousand pounds of silver, to make peace. He accepted the offer; and then he and his Huns rushed over Germany and France and Italy, as Alaric had done before, doing still more dreadful mischief as they went, till at last he, too, died,—very likely was poisoned. Wild and fierce as he was, however, Attila was not so bad as the Romans of this time; for he was capable of some *good feelings*, and when he gave a *promise*, *he would keep it*.

Towards the end of the fifth century the very last Emperor of Rome there ever was, one named Romulus *Augustulus*, or "Little Augustus," was dethroned, and one of the barbarians, named Odoacer, made king of Italy in his place.

All over Italy and Spain, and France and Greece, there were now to be seen cities lying half in ruins,—the few inhabitants left in them often half starving; gardens and fields once cultivated overgrown with weeds and bushes, or turned into swamps; all the statues and beautiful things possessed by the Romans thrown down and broken; in many places, heaps of dead bodies lying unburied. Something like this is seen in every country where a war has been going on; but these wars of the Roman Empire with the barbarians continued for more than three hundred years almost incessantly. We have accounts of the desolation they caused by writers

who lived at the time, and who thought there would never be an end of this misery, but that it would go on till the world was destroyed. But we know that all this mischief has been repaired; and now we see, though there is much still to be done, a far, far better, happier, wiser world than it was under the Roman Empire. One of the good things we learn in history is, not to judge only by what happens during a little time, but to take more extensive views, to keep up our courage in times of misfortune, and trust that God will give us brighter days, and in prosperous times not to forget that there may come days of sorrow. Perhaps it is not good for nations, as it certainly is not for individuals, to have always prosperity, any more than it would be for fields to have always sunshine; but it is of no use to pretend that we can *always* see what are the purposes of *Providence* in the government of the

world. It would be very strange if we could.

It is very difficult now for us to imagine the state Europe must have been in at that time; but if we can suppose for a moment that hundreds of thousands of North American Indians, wild Australians, Bushmen, Caffres, and any other savages we can think of, were let loose in London, that more and more were perpetually coming, and that the London people, though rich and luxurious, were not brave and clever, but lazy, stupid, cowardly, and unable to make any resistance, we shall have some idea of what it must have been like.

Constantinople, which is built of a three-cornered shape, and has the sea on two sides, and immensely strong fortifications on the other, had been able to keep out the barbarians, and the Emperors of the East kept their place for nearly a thousand years more. In some respects this was fortunate,

for there were thus preserved many arts and various kinds of knowledge, that must otherwise have been lost; but the government was as bad a one, and the people as foolish and corrupt, as they well could be, just what one might have expected, considering they were the remains of the Roman Empire.

The horrible sports of the amphitheatre, the fighting of men and wild beasts, had indeed been abolished, principally from the noble, heroic self-devotion of a Christian named Telemachus, who one day, when there was a great show of gladiators, leaped down into the blood-stained arena, and commanded the people, in the name of Christ, to desist from these wicked practices. Telemachus was killed, as he expected to be; but soon after a law was made that there should be no *more* combats of gladiators, or *throwing of prisoners* to wild beasts.

To make themselves amends for the loss of this favourite amusement, however, the Romans took to be quite wild about horse and chariot racing.

At this time, in Constantinople, they did not care half so much about the most serious affairs, nor even about the danger their city was in from the terrible hordes of enemies who were continually coming almost to the walls of it, as about who had won and who lost the races in the Circus. The rich men used to drive their own chariots in these races, and the people took different sides, and divided themselves into four parties,—Reds and Blues, Greens and Whites,—whose jealousy and anger against each other was so great, that the race usually ended in a general fight, and in many people being stabbed. Even the Emperor and the court took one side or the other, wore the colours on all occasions, and joined in these stupid quarrels. In the reign

of the Emperor Anastatius, three thousand of the Blues were once murdered in a riot by their rivals; but under Justinian, as the court belonged to the Blues, they got the victory, and tormented and killed the Greens. In the year 532, when Justinian had a festival at the Circus to celebrate his accession to the throne, the Greens took the opportunity to beg his protection: but instead of granting it, as he ought to have done, he called them blasphemers, Samaritans, heretics, Jews, and all sorts of names; and they in return then told him he was a tyrant and a murderer, and a perjured villain, and an ass; and then there was again a riot, and a dreadful massacre in the streets. After this, the government did make an attempt to punish the chief of the rioters; but then the Blues, too, were angry, and both parties joined against the government. They ran

about cutting down whoever opposed them; the slaughtering went on for five days, the city was set on fire, and a great part of it burnt, and the Greens were just about to proclaim another Emperor, and Justinian to run away, when the Empress contrived to make the two parties quarrel with each other again, and then sent for Belisarius, a great Roman general, and almost the only great man we hear of for a long time. He brought three thousand veteran soldiers into the city, marched to the Circus, where the Greens were assembled, and cut down, it is said, thirty thousand of them. Then what was called tranquillity was restored. These are the sort of things we hear of during the reigns of the Greek Emperors in Constantinople.

What I have been telling you took place at the time when the Seven Saxon kingdoms, generally called (from a

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Greek word meaning seven) the Heph-tarchy, existed in England. I believe it is not quite certain that there were exactly seven, but that is of little consequence. We do know certainly that it was divided into many small states.

LETTER XXV.

WHEN the great move of the wild northern nations was at last pretty well over, and they had all become tolerably settled in different parts of Europe, it began, of course, to be a little quieter; but it had, as I have said, a dreary and desolate aspect.

The Roman roads were mostly destroyed; the cultivated lands had herds of cattle turned into them, or were entirely spoiled and laid waste; the trades and different kinds of industry that had been going on in many places were entirely stopped: even Italy, that had been like a garden, became half covered with forests and marshes, and wolves made their dens in what had *been beautiful pleasure-grounds.*

It would be of no use to describe to you very exactly, the different tribes amongst which Europe was now divided ; but we may say, in general, that the Goths had settled in Spain, — the Goths and Lombards, in Italy, — the Saxons, as you know, in England, — the Huns, who, after the death of their king, Attila, were never again so powerful, had mostly remained in the country, since called, for that reason, Hungary, — and a numerous and powerful tribe called Franks, in Gaul, which also after that changed its name, and came to be called France. These Franks had come from Germany, and were, like the other German races, tall, large men, with fair hair and blue eyes, — particularly well armed, and fond of fighting. They were remarkable for being sometimes very riotous and disobedient to their chiefs, and sometimes even too submissive, so that *they* allowed themselves to be made

almost slaves. Some people think they notice the same thing in their descendants, the French people, who are living now.

About the time when the Saxons came to England, a chief or king of the Franks, named Clovis, had become very powerful. He got possession of so large a portion of France that it was called a kingdom, and he is generally named the Founder of the Monarchy of France. He afterwards became what he called a Christian, though he was a fierce half-savage man, and quite unable to understand anything of the excellence of the Christian religion; but one day, when he was going to fight a great battle, he said he would pray to the God of the Christians to give him the victory, and promise to become a Christian if he did, for then he should know that he was more powerful than his old gods. He did not care for any god

that would not help him to win battles. It happened that he did win the victory, and so he went and got christened, and took three thousand of his Franks with him, and had them christened at the same time. He knew, also, we may take notice, that it would be just now very much to his advantage to be called a Christian, as the inhabitants of Gaul were now mostly Christians, and they would, in that case, make less resistance to his authority.

As for the first Frank kings who came after Clovis, it would be very little more interesting to tell of their doings, than of the fighting of a pack of fierce dogs over a bone. The bone was the kingdom of France (or a part of it), — and there was an incessant snarling and biting and tearing going on between brothers and cousins, and sons and fathers, to get possession of *it*. After these came a set called the

Rois fainéans, or Lazy Kings, — who did nothing at all, but let the masters of their households, — the Mayors of the Palace, as they are called, — govern for them.

Once a year, in the month of May, when it was the custom of the Franks to have a grand meeting of the whole nation, these do-nothing kings used to make their appearance, say what their mayors told them to say, and then get into great clumsy waggons, drawn by four oxen, which served them for state coaches, — and be dragged back to their rude palaces, and then no one saw or heard anything of them till the next year.

It is a relief to come at last to a really noble, valiant, and worthy king, one who must be admired by every body, and was loved also by those who lived with him and knew him. This was Charlemagne, — that is, Charles the Great, — one of the most remark-

able kings who have ever lived. But, before we come to him, I must tell you that, during the time that these Lazy Kings were reigning in France, another great change had taken place in Europe. A people named the Saracens had come into notice, and, in a hundred years' time, had rushed on, conquering and driving every thing before them, from Arabia, where they began, along the north of Africa, through Spain, where they met the Goths, and right up to the middle of France. I must tell you something of who they were; and, to do this, we must look once more at the part of the world near ancient Babylon.

The country which had Babylon on the east, and Syria on the west, stretches out towards the south into a wide peninsula called Arabia. It is, reckoning in the deserts, about four or five times as large as Germany. *A great part of it is hot sand, as*

barren as that of the great Sahara desert in Africa ; and sometimes, when blown on by a storm wind, the sand has been known to bury whole caravans of men and horses, nay even armies, and swallow them up as the sea might do. In some parts, especially along the sea-coast, there are rocks and hills of naked stone ; but towards the south, there are valleys so fine and fertile that they are capable of yielding many of the most precious productions of the earth, — corn and rice, sugar and grapes, spices and perfumes, with which, from very ancient times, the people have carried on trade ; but the greater number of the inhabitants of Arabia have always led a wandering life. Camels and horses are almost their only possessions ; they are very poor, but generally content with a little, and very proud of their independence. They are subject to no king, but each tribe is ruled merely

by its own chief, who is nearly as poor as the rest, and leads exactly the same kind of life as they do ; they are almost in the same state now as they were thirteen hundred years ago.

In the time of the Seven Saxon kingdoms of England (568) there was born in one of the Arab tribes a man named Abul Kasem Mohammed, or Mahomet. He was early left an orphan, with no other riches than five camels and one female slave ; and he remained till he was forty years old in quite a private life ; but then all at once he began to speak of a new religion, which he said had been revealed to him by a certain angel Gabriel sent to him from Heaven on purpose.

What he taught the people was partly wrong and partly right. He told them that there was but one God, instead of the many idols which they had been worshipping, but he also said that he *himself* was the only prophet of God ;

and that whoever would not believe this ought to be killed; he said also that he had been up into heaven, and had seen all that was going on there.

Some of the rules for conduct that Mahomet gave his followers were very good—very much like the Christian indeed,—and it is by no means unlikely that he may have learned them from some of the preachers of Christianity, for you know this was between five and six hundred years after Jesus lived, and Syria, where he lived, was the next country to Arabia; so that, though the Arabs did not, I dare say, hear much of what was going on in the rest of the world, it is strange, indeed, if none of them had heard of Jesus,—especially as Mahomet himself had been in Palestine. The new religion did not go on very well at first. In three years he had only fourteen followers, even reckoning his female slave and his wife (I believe he had

but one wife then, though afterwards he had eleven more); but when his tribe began to persecute him, others took his part, and a quarrel began which gradually came to be a war, in which his followers were victorious. This, they thought, was a sure sign that they were right; and so they went on attacking all the nations round them, and insisting upon every one becoming a Mahometan too, and believing, or saying they believed, all that was in the Koran — a very strange book which Mahomet had written, containing a few good and wise things and a great deal of nonsense.

After Mahomet's death his followers proclaimed war to the whole world of unbelievers; and all the tribes of Arabia, uniting together, marched out under the banner of their prophet — full of burning zeal, and determined to convert or kill all whom they should *meet*.

One of their leaders boasted that he had killed a hundred and fifty thousand of the unbelievers. Many fine cities of Persia, the whole of Syria and Phœnicia, and Jerusalem, fell into their hands; and while some went eastward to Judea, others conquered Egypt, and as I have said Spain, and then at last crossed the Pyrenees, and entered France. All Europe, they declared, was now to become Mahometan; and they defeated the Christians in two or three tremendous battles, and filled all Christian countries with lamentation and terror.

Some of the people who had been driven from their country by the victories of the Saracens, as they were now called, that is, "men from the East," came to the Frankish kings, and begged their assistance.

There was reigning at this time not one of the Lazy Kings, but Charles the son of Pepin of Heristal, one of those

mayors or masters of the palace who, as I said, used to do all the kings' work, and who afterwards, with the consent, I believe, of the *Roi fainéant*, was himself made king. Well, this Charles knew there was no time to lose: so he immediately collected all the Frank and German warriors he could find, and marched with them down into the plains of Poitiers, where the Saracens were, and fought them for six days together; and though their numbers were much greater than those of his army, at last, on the seventh day, he entirely beat them, and drove them back. The remainder got away as fast as they could across the Pyrenees again; and Charles after this was called Charles *Martel*,—that is, the Hammer,—because of the great blow he had struck at the Mahometans. A very important battle it was; and if the Saracens had not been defeated then, there is no knowing whether the greatest part of Europe

might not have been now like what Turkey is.

The grandson of this Charles the Hammer was that Charlemagne whom I mentioned a little while ago. The name of Charlemagne was made from Charles and Magnus, the Latin word for great: and you will suppose, from his having gained this name, that Charlemagne was a warrior and a conqueror; for, according to the ideas of the time, and indeed I am afraid of most times, before and since, other kinds of greatness would not have been so much noticed. But Charlemagne was something better than most conquerors; he was not a mere ambitious man, who wanted only to make himself talked about, but he really laboured with all his might to do his duty, and govern the immense territories he reigned over as well as he possibly could.

He had a great, wild, unruly country to govern, and its limits to defend

against multitudes of fierce, lawless men — Saracens in one place, Saxons in another, ferocious pirate Danes all along the sea-shore. He had often to rush,—he and his Franks,—from the banks of the Weser and the Elbe, down to the Tiber or the Ebro, through pathless forests, over wild mountains, by dangerous morasses, to endure frequently hunger and thirst and cold, and always fatigue and danger. His most terrible wars were those against the Saxons, which were declared by the priests, the Pope, and all the Christian nations, to be a service to God; for the Saxons were heathens and idolaters, and slaughtered human creatures as sacrifices to their deities. Then, and for long afterwards, the Christians used to call heathens and unbelievers the *enemies of God*; and from thinking of them as his enemies, they naturally considered that it was doing him a service to kill them. They did not consider,

that if God has patience with heathens and unbelievers, so should we have ; and that if it pleased him to make them believers at once, he could do so.

Charlemagne's first great war with the Saxons was in the year 727 ; and almost before he had concluded it, the Pope sent to implore his help against the Lombards, who had possession of all the north of Italy — the part which is still called Lombardy. In those days none of the Christian people of Europe thought of the Pope, as Protestants do now, only as the Bishop of Rome, and as no better than any other man ; they considered him as the representative of God on earth, and as having all power to forgive their sins in this world, and let them into Heaven or keep them out of it, when they died : so, of course, they were mostly submissive to him, and proud and happy to do any thing for him. Afterwards, indeed, when they found how many

Popes there were who were ambitious, bad men, and cared much more for power and riches than for religion, they began to find out that there was some mistake in this, and that serving the Pope was often a very different thing from serving God. Even during these early times they did sometimes get into a quarrel with the Pope, as the Lombards had done now; but I believe they thought all the while they were doing very wrong, and in the end they always begged his pardon, and submitted to whatever punishment or *penance*, as it was called, he imposed upon them.

Well, as soon as he heard he was wanted, down came Charlemagne and his Franks, over the Alps, into Italy, took one city after another for the Pope, and then went to Rome, where he was received quite in triumph, went in grand state to St. Peter's Church, *confessed* his sins, got them all forgiven

by the Pope, swore eternal friendship to him and his successors, and then went back again to fight the Lombards.

The end of the war was, that Charlemagne, before he went back to France, took the whole of Lombardy, and made it a part of his empire.

While he was in Italy the Saxons broke into his country again on the north, and began burning and destroying every thing they came near. Back went Charlemagne again to Germany, drove out the Saxons, forced them to make peace, and built several very strong castles to defend his frontier. Two years afterwards we find him again in Italy; a Lombard prince, whom he had set to rule over a part of his new territory, had revolted against him, and he had to come and put down the insurrection. Then the Saxons broke out again in the north, and he had to rush once more back to the middle of Germany. This time

he seems to have treated the poor Saxons with great severity; but he bethought himself also of another expedient. He resolved to make Christians of them—a very good plan we should think, too, but not very easy to manage. In those rude times, however, people did not consider that the state of the heart and mind is the really important thing; but it was supposed, that if any one had been regularly christened by a priest, he was a Christian. Charlemagne, therefore, had many thousands of the Saxons christened in the following year, inviting all their chiefs to come to a meeting at a place called Paderborn, in Westphalia, and there they promised not to make war upon him again. Their most valiant chief, Wittekind, however, would not come: and those who did, only came from fear; for all they knew of Christianity was, that it was the religion of their terrible enemy, who had

destroyed the memorials of their own old gods whom they believed in, and of course they did not wish to have any thing to do with it; and though they promised now to remain faithful to Charlemagne, they did not intend to keep their promise if they could help it.

While he was still at Paderborn, there came to him a curious embassy. Some Arabs, in the dress of their people, which had never been seen in that country before, came, as messengers from two of their chiefs in Spain, to beg his help against some of their superiors, who were oppressing them; and he was pleased that they should apply to him, as it showed how far his fame had spread, and the year after there he was in Spain, near the river Ebro, fighting, and, as usual, coming off victorious. But the Saxons took advantage of his absence to begin the war again, and Charlemagne had to make a *dangerous* passage across the Pyrenees,

where also he was attacked by the Saracens, and lost many men.

This time he was very angry, and behaved, what we must call, cruelly; but I do not suppose he thought he was doing wrong. Yet the Saxons were not much to blame either; for they had always been free men, and they did not like being made subjects of one who had for years been carrying on war with them, and would not even leave them their own old gods.

This is one of the wars in which we can sympathise, in some measure, with both parties, for each would naturally think they were in the right. In the German town of Goslar, in Hanover, there is still preserved a very curious memorial of those times. It is a writing, in the old Saxon language, of what seems to have been a vow, taken by the heathen Saxons, after Charlemagne had been inflicting some *great severities* upon their people. It

says: "Holy, Great Woden! help us and our countryman Wittekind, and his under chiefs, against the detestable Charles the Murderer; and I will give thee an auer-ox, and two sheep, and all my booty; and I will sacrifice to thee all my prisoners upon thy holy Hartz mountain."

Many a Frank captive has doubtless had his blood shed upon those great blocks of stone that still lie on the summit of the Brocken.

LETTER XXVI.

WE have now seen something of the kind of life Charlemagne led as a king and a warrior, and it went on very much in the same way for forty years. Now let us look at what sort of man he was in his private life, for it is always by what people are at home that we can best judge of them.

We find, then, that he was a very kind father and a generous friend; and that, though as brave as a man could be, he was mild and affectionate to people about him. Though he generally knew better than any one what ought to be done, he was always willing to listen patiently to advice; and though his own education had been so *much neglected*, that he did not know

how to write, he did all he could to have his people taught, and set up a kind of school in his palace, to which he invited all the learned men he could hear of. He took great pains, too, to learn to write, though he does not seem to have got on very well. I suppose his hands were too much used to handle rough weapons of war to manage a pen properly, as he had not been taught when he was young; but it is very pleasing to hear of this renowned king and mighty warrior putting his slate and his copies under his pillow of a night, and, when he could not sleep, which happened often, getting up and practising his writing. You must not think, however, that the fine old Emperor Charlemagne was a dunce at his books, for he understood both Latin and Greek. Latin, it is true, he might have picked up without study, as it was not, as now, a *dead* language—that is, one not used in conversation by any nation.

It was then still constantly spoken in many parts of Europe, and in Italy was only gradually becoming changed into what is now called Italian, which is made out of the mixture of the languages of the northern nations with the Latin. But Greek he must have learned from books, and we are told he read it quite well. In one of his visits to Rome he had met with a very learned and worthy Englishman, a monk of the name of Alcuin, whom he immediately engaged to come and teach his children; and often he used to come into the room where they were having their lessons, and learn with them. The great glory he had acquired in war never made him proud or insolent, or forgetful of other people's merits; and yet his fame had extended, not only over all Europe, but even into the distant countries of the East. That Caliph *Haroun-al-Raschid*, whose name you *perhaps* know from his being talked


about in the "Arabian Nights," was a real sovereign, living at the same time as Charlemagne ; and he had heard of him, and once sent a friendly embassy to his court, with presents of costly Indian spices, and other valuable things, amongst which was a water-clock that showed the time in a very ingenious way, and was, I believe, the first clock that was ever seen in Europe. Once one of the Arab princes in Spain, with whom he was now at peace, sent him some elephants as a token of regard ; and we hear also of ambassadors from Persia. Charlemagne well deserved his fame, too ; for though he was almost always engaged in war, which in the state Europe was then in he could scarcely help, he was very far from thinking that war was the only thing a king had to attend to, as some great warrior kings have done. I have said that he set up an academy in his palace, where he assembled all the wisest

and most learned men he could find, and he used to associate with them quite like a brother, without giving himself any airs because he was emperor; and here, though he attended to Latin and Greek, he did not fail to do all he could for the improvement of his people's native language, and he made a collection of the songs of the old German bards, and even a kind of grammar of German, which no one had thought of before. Then he had many consultations with the learned men about the education of the people, and he set up great numbers of schools for them, where all could be taught reading, writing, and the doctrines of the Christian religion. About the education of the clergy he was particularly anxious, thinking of course that it was of most consequence, as they had to teach others. As most of the priests and monks in France and Germany were then very *ignorant*, he had the sermons of the

best Greek preachers translated for them. He encouraged them to copy out all the good books they could get, and he collected what for that time was a large library (of course, all in manuscript, as printing was not known). Some of these manuscripts are still in existence, and may be seen in Rome, Vienna, and Paris.

When he heard of any wise and good priests, he used to make them bishops, and get them to watch over his schools; and as he thought it would be good for his people to hear better music in the churches than they had, he got the Pope to send him some organ players and singers from Italy. But the Italians said the singing in the Frank churches was, after all, only like the howling of wild beasts, so I am afraid the poor Emperor was disappointed in his music as well as his writing. He desired very much, also, to induce his rude warlike nobles to

pay more attention to learning, and persuaded many of them to send their sons to Alcuin's school. On one of those occasions, when he came in to see how the school was going on, he desired that all the boys who had done their work properly should be placed on one side of him, and all the idle fellows on the other; and then he found that the best scholars were the sons of poor parents, and most of the lazy dogs were young nobles. To the first, he said:—"My dear children, I am very glad to hear how well you have been learning; go on so, and depend on it you shall have your reward." But at the others he shook his mighty fist, and said:—"You good-for-nothing fellows! you call yourselves sons of nobles, do you! But don't fancy your nobility, or your pretty faces, will do you any good with me — if you don't mend your *manners*."



But however fond he was of learning and learned men, he paid no less attention to other business, both in the management of his own family and household, and of the country in general. One wonders how he could have found time for all that he did, but he was so very industrious that he made every moment of use. While he was leading armies, and making laws for great nations, besides finding odd intervals of leisure in which he did his school exercises, and learnt Greek dialogues, he thought, also, of how he could promote the welfare of his people in matters of trade and navigation, which they knew very little of. He built a light-house on the coast of France, near Boulogne, — the first, I believe, that was ever built there; made several sea-ports safe and convenient for ships; and he had a plan for what even now would be thought a *great and useful undertaking*, — a canal

to join the river Rhine with the Danube, and so open the whole waterway from the Black Sea to the Atlantic Ocean. It was more than a plan, too; for he set to work at it with his whole army, and would have succeeded, but for want of some knowledge in the science of hydraulics, or the mode of carrying water through pipes, which nobody in the world then had.

Even some of our very latest improvements, that of public baths, Charlemagne thought of; for he made baths in which more than a hundred people could swim at a time, and he set his people the example by swimming in them with his whole court. Instead of indulging his appetites in eating and drinking and luxuries, he was quite plain and frugal in his own way of living; and he attended to the expenditure of his family and court to see that there was no needless waste: *yet he was master of France and Ger-*

many, and great part of Italy and Spain; and, on occasions when he thought it right, he could appear with all the splendour and grandeur of his high imperial rank.

Never was there a man more thoroughly fit to be a king, and command other men. Almost the only sovereign I know of worthy to be placed beside him, was our own English Alfred, who lived nearly a hundred years after him. But of him you have heard a great deal in the history of England. One thing more I have to say about Charlemagne, because, though it does not seem very important, it afterwards had very important consequences.

On one of the visits to Rome which he made as the Protector of the Pope (it was on Christmas-day in the year 800), when he went, as usual, to St. Peter's Church, and while he was devoutly kneeling at the high altar, in *the stately purple robes of a Roman*

patrician, the Pope came suddenly behind him, placed a jewelled crown upon his head, and a choir of musicians sung out, "Long life and victory to Charles Augustus, crowned by God, the great Emperor of the Romans!" — and then the whole immense crowd burst into loud acclamations of "Long live the Emperor of Rome, — the new Augustus!"

Charlemagne appeared very much surprised, and said, if he had known what was going to be done, he would not have come to the church; which does not seem to me at all impossible, though some historians think it was not true, and that he really knew all about it. I think that, if he did, there could be no reason for pretending he did not, for there was no one to prevent his doing as he liked. The Pope, perhaps, may have meant *at the time* only to pay a grand compliment to the monarch to whom he

had been so much indebted, for the title of Emperor of Rome was still thought the grandest that could be given: but the Pope having on this occasion put the crown on the head of Charlemagne, was afterwards made one of the pretences for saying that no emperor was properly emperor, unless the Pope crowned him; for it was said, if the Emperor, who was the greatest of sovereigns, was not, of course no other king was, and so all the kings of Europe ought to depend upon the popes as to whether they should be kings or not.

LETTER XXVII.

IN ancient times very little was known of the countries then called Scandinavia, but now Denmark, Norway, and Sweden; but some strange stories had been told about them by a few of the Greek and Roman writers, — things so wonderfully unlike the truth, that one cannot even guess how they came to be believed. It was said that these countries had cloudless summer skies, and fields always fresh and green; and that the happy mortals who lived in them, had their heads constantly crowned with flowers, and had nothing to do but to enjoy themselves. Many hundred years after this other things, very different, were *heard* about these countries, and their

inhabitants were described as men of giant size and strength, with fierce countenances and long shaggy hair, carrying in their hands great clubs, or young trees torn up by the roots, and looking altogether very much like the giants and ogres you hear of in Jack the Giant Killer. Indeed, I believe that story, and others like it, were taken from these traditions about the early Northmen.

These stories, of course, were not true either, though they were nearer the truth than the others; but the time was coming, when the people all over the rest of Europe were to have good reason to know what kind of men the Northmen were. Towards the end of the time of the Seven Saxon kingdoms of England, and of the reign of Charlemagne in France and Germany, bands of these sea-robbers sometimes landed on the shores of the North Sea, and of the English Channel, robbed

all the people they could find, often killed them also, set fire to houses and churches, and then rushed back to their ships, and sailed away again. They were very much the same sort of men that the Saxons had been when they first came; but that was nearly four hundred years ago, and the Saxons who were now living in England, had become much more peaceable and civilised.

The Christian religion had long since been introduced; churches and monasteries had been built; and they had among them some as learned men as any then to be found in Europe, besides having learned to cultivate the ground, and practise many useful arts. They had, however, become in some degree unused to war, and so, though they were brave men, they were not quite a match for the Danes, especially as they had forgotten how to manage *ships* — while the Danes, on the con-

trary, were almost more at home on the sea than on land.

Every chief family among them had its own ship, and often they had no way of getting their living but by sailing about, and robbing wherever they could find anything to take. They did not think there was anything dishonourable in this, for the only virtue they knew of was valour, in fighting; and the younger sons of the kings and nobles, or Jarls, as they were called, regularly took to this roving pirate life as a profession, and named themselves "Skimmers of the Sea," and "Sea Kings." Without having any chart or any compass to guide their course, they sailed over every sea they could find in search of booty or of lands, where they might make new settlements. They would cross the stormy North Sea from Denmark to England and France, at first in mere canoes, made out of the trunks of trees; and the larger vessels, in which

they afterwards made their grand invasions, had their sides made only of wicker-work covered with hides. In these they went across the Atlantic to Iceland and Greenland, and over the stormy Bay of Biscay into the Mediterranean, sailed up the rivers, and plundered and burnt all the villages and towns they came to. After Charlemagne was dead, the Northmen made their way up the Rhine, the Somme, the Loire, and the Garonne, and burnt Paris and Bordeaux, and many other cities.

The people all round the sea-coast were terrified at their very name; and for this reason, as it is natural to dislike those you are afraid of, the accounts of the Danes given by writers of the time, mostly tell us all that was bad in them, and nothing of what was good.

We must judge of people, however, *by the means and opportunities afforded*

them, and not look for the virtues of Christians in these wild, untaught Pagan Northmen. Almost the only virtue they knew of, as I said, was valour, and that they practised to perfection. They cared nothing about wounding and killing enemies, for they did not think that was wrong at all; but they were just as ready to bear pain as to inflict it, and that not merely without complaining, but even with merriment. They would not allow pain to make them sorrowful for a moment. They were not in the least afraid of death, but would sing, and laugh and joke, when they were about to be killed.

Now, we may not think it at all necessary to do this, and very few of us now have any occasion to show our valour by fighting; but there are many other ways. Valour consists in never shrinking from pain when any duty calls on us to endure it; and as every one has to bear pain of some kind at some time.

or other, every one has occasion for valour. If we come to think of it, indeed, a great many virtues depend upon this. If we are cowardly, we shall most likely not be honest and speak the truth, for we shall often fear that it may bring us some harm to do so; we shall not be industrious, for we shall be afraid of the trouble of work; the fear of pain will be constantly in our way whenever we try to do any think good or great. But if we can learn to bear pain, and do without pleasure, we may become almost whatever we wish to be.

The Northmen were, of course, quite unlearned, but they were not at all stupid; they had among them an immense number of poems and tales which they learned by heart from a class of men called Scalds, or Story Tellers, whose business it was to compose as well as to repeat, in poetry, the exploits of their *kings and heroes*. They could carry

such a stock in their heads, as to us seems almost incredible. We hear of one, for instance, who had repeated sixty poems in one evening, and, when asked whether he knew any more, said that he knew at least twice as many. These poems were seldom written down, or at least not till long after this time, for the letters they had then, those called Runic letters, were used only for religious and magical purposes; and it is remarkable that they were exactly like what the ancient Phœnicians used, and such as have been found among the ruins of ancient Persian cities; and this is one of the many circumstances which show that the Northmen, like all the people of Europe, came first from the East.

During the ninth century, that is, the hundred years after the death of Charlemagne, in 814, the history of England is hardly anything more than an account of fights with the Danes,

who were constantly getting more and more troublesome, and at last would not go away again at all, but made a settlement in Northumberland, and sent for fresh swarms of their countrymen to come over and join them.

When Alfred came to be king, you know that, brave and wise as he was, he could not contend with them. Though he fought nine battles with them in one year, he could not drive them out, but his men were defeated, and he had to hide himself in a lonely morass. When at last he did get the victory, he was obliged to content himself with compelling them to keep in their own part of the country. Of nine kings who came after Alfred, six were very young, mere boys, and they could not contend with the Danes at all. The only one who could keep them off in the least was the brave Edmund Ironside, as he was called ; but after his death the Dane, Canute the Great, became king of all England at the same

time that he was king of Norway and Denmark. He reigned nineteen years; and after his death his two sons, Hardicanute and Harold Harefoot, struggled with each other for the throne, but the people disliked them so much that they afterwards got back one of the old Saxon family to be their king. This was Edward the Confessor, and the king who came after him was the Harold who was killed at the battle of Hastings. William, who gained that battle, and his followers, were, you know, Normans, that is Northmen, though, as they had then been settled in France for two hundred years, and had become Christians, their manners were different from those of the old Pagan Skimmers of the Sea. You must remember that these people, whom we hear of at one time as Saxons, at another as Danes, and afterwards as Normans, were really all of the same great race, and all came at first from *the East*.

LETTER XXVIII.

FOR a long while after the reign of Charlemagne, the countries that he had governed, instead of improving, seemed to be going back quite into barbarism.

All his good plans were forgotten or neglected; the schools that he had set up went to decay; and many even of the priests of France in the tenth century did not know how to read. They used to learn by heart, from hearing other priests, the prayers and services they had to repeat; but if a book were put before them, it was common for them to answer in two Latin words, *nescio literas*; that is, "I don't know my letters." Many convents and churches had not a book, not even a Bible, *belonging* to them; and as both priests

and people were so ignorant, of course their notions of religion became mixed up with stories of ghosts, and demons, and witches, and all kinds of superstitious nonsense, much of which was remembered from the old Pagan times, and now got to be associated in their minds with the doctrines and precepts of Christianity.

The nobles never attempted to learn any thing, but lived apart, each doing just what he pleased on his own land. When first the northern tribes took possession of the countries of Europe, the chiefs divided the land amongst them. The king had the largest portion, but, as he did not get any money by taxes as modern kings do, he had to live on the produce of it. The nobles undertook, in return for their estates, to help the king when he went to war, bring with them a certain number of men, and remain with him a certain time—generally forty days. Then the

noble divided his estate, and gave parts of it to others on the same condition ; that is, that the tenant or vassal should come when required, and bring with him some fighting men to help the noble, just as the noble was to help the king. This second vassal again did the same thing, and so on, till the land was divided into quite little bits, that could be cultivated by one man, who undertook to come himself and serve the person from whom he had his land. This way of managing was called the Feudal System, and some such plan has been adopted in most countries that have been conquered ; but there were two very bad things in it.

In the first place, nobody except those who lived on his own land cared for the king ; for he had no police and no soldiers of his own to make people obey the laws, and, as each noble on his *own estates* could set him at defiance,

there was really no such thing as a government for the whole country.

Then there was another thing that was still worse, — the condition of the poor people, who, though they were so little thought of, made up, like the slaves of ancient Greece and Rome, the greatest number of the inhabitants. They were spoken of as “the meaner sort,” and hardly considered worth counting, and, if they were cheated by their landlords, they had no one to take their part. Besides going to fight when they were wanted, as they had at first agreed to do, they were soon obliged, under some pretence or other, to give the lord so much of their corn, and cattle, and fowls, and every thing they had, that they had often hardly any thing left for themselves. Even their time was taken from them ; for they were obliged to spend the greatest part of it in working in the landlords’ fields, of course without any pay. No laws were made for

their advantage; and if there had been, there was, as I have said, no powerful government to compel the nobles to obey them. By degrees, therefore, the lower class of people became quite slaves, and were considered to belong to the landlord just as his horses and cows did. When an estate was sold or given away, the men and women who lived upon it were sold or given away with it; and in one respect the situation of these *serfs*, as they were called, was even worse than that of the negro slaves in America is now, for the master was not allowed to set them free even if he wished it, if the greater man on whom he depended, thought it would lessen the value of the land. The poor serf had many masters under this feudal system,—for the one directly over him had another again over him, of whom he was the vassal, and he again another over him, and so on up to the *king*. But the king was not at all the

most powerful; for there was but one king, and the nobles were many, who had all the same interest, and supported each other against the king. The only friend of the poor was the Christian Church, which, even corrupted as it was at this time, and mixed with so much that to us now seems foolish and wrong, was still at that time the best thing in the world.

The clergy did what little was done in the cause of the serfs. They established a great number of holidays, when the masters were forbidden to make the serfs work for them. They tried to check the perpetual miserable little wars in which the peasants suffered so much, by ordering that there should always be peace from all feuds, from nine o'clock on Saturday evening, till one o'clock on Monday or longer, and for some weeks about Christmas and Easter time. This was called the Peace of God. Perhaps you will wonder to

hear me say *ordered*; and you will ask if these fierce warlike nobles, who cared nothing for the king and the laws, minded what the priest said to them. Fortunately, they did in general; and the most remarkable thing in the history of Europe for many hundred years, is the great power gained by the clergy. For 300 years almost all the public business of Europe, as well as the private affairs of every family, were managed by them, and the Pope in every country could do far more than the king.

But I shall have more to say of this presently.

LETTER XXIX.

ABOUT the time of William the Conqueror the nobles had begun to build themselves strong castles, which they placed if possible on high rocks, so as to look down on all the country round, and see when enemies were approaching. They surrounded them with walls and towers, and kept in them a number of armed men to defend them if they were attacked. If they had a quarrel with any neighbour, they did not go to law with him, or complain to the government, but they collected their men, and went and fought him and his men, and took every thing they could find belonging to him, and destroyed what they could not bring home. Other nobles did the like to them ; but those

who suffered most in these little wars, or feuds as they were called, were the poor peasants, who had nothing to do with the quarrels—for their corn was trampled down or burnt, and their cattle stolen, and they themselves and their families exposed to all kinds of ill-usage. One consequence of these feuds was, that there came from time to time a terrible distress for food—a famine; and though, perhaps, when one part of a country was starving, in another a hundred miles off there was plenty of food,—the sufferers knew nothing about it, for there were no letters passing, and scarcely any travellers. Even if they happened to hear of it, the people who had corn and cattle were afraid to send it; for it was very likely to be seized on the road, either by some noble, or by some of the bands of robbers who harboured in the great forests.

The merchants mostly travelled with *their* goods themselves, and only in

large companies and well armed ; but every strong castle they passed was an object of fear to them, for, if their property was not seized in barefaced robbery, such a heavy toll was demanded by every lord through whose lands they passed, that they got hardly any profit for all their labour and peril. If there was a river that they could go by, their case was often not much better ; for there were boats, full of armed men, lying in wait at every few miles' distance, to take care that they did not pass without paying.

In many places, if the travellers escaped being robbed, the laws were so barbarous that they sometimes suffered nearly as much from them as from robbers. If they were shipwrecked on a coast, not only all their goods, but often they themselves, became the property of the lord of the place. If a boat went aground in the river, if a waggon broke down on the road, all

the things contained in it might be seized upon. In some places, a stranger who stayed more than a year became the slave of the owner of the land ; or he might be injured, or killed, without any one taking any notice. A foreigner had no protection from the laws, and those who came from another part of the same country were often considered as strangers and foreigners. During the time of the terrible attacks of the Northmen on the sea-coast of France, if the poor people fled further inland to escape from them, they were often seized on by their own countrymen as *strangers*, and made slaves. In those barbarous times, "stranger" was considered to mean the same thing as enemy. The very magistrates and judges often joined with robbers, or helped to conceal them. We hear of a king of France, named Charles the Bald, being obliged to make some of his *judges take an oath*, not only that they


would not shelter robbers, but that they would not become robbers themselves.

The son of Charlemagne, Louis the Pious, was a good man, but not clever enough to make his rude nobles obey him, and so he thought it better to divide his empire into three portions between his three sons. To Lothaire he gave Italy, or at least that part of it which had been Charlemagne's; to Louis, Germany; and the one I mentioned just now, Charles the Bald, his younger son, became king of France when Louis the Pious died. For nearly 100 years the descendants of Charlemagne remained on the throne, but all his spirit seemed to have left them; indeed, most of them were stupid fellows, with hardly sense enough to manage their own houses, much less a great kingdom. They were always wrangling with their brothers and cousins, getting their people into wars from which neither they nor any one else got any good.

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and trying to seize on new territories when they did not know how to keep the old ones. Most of them got nicknames, by which they are still known in history, and by which we can just distinguish them one from another. One was called Charles the Fat, another Louis the Stammerer, and so on. Every time a king died, there arose disputes and wars about who should be king next, and very often the nobles chose the stupidest on purpose, as they thought they could better domineer over him; and they took the opportunity, when there was a king of this sort, to seize on more land, and to declare that their fiefs should not be given back to the king at their deaths, but become the property of their families. Sometimes these were lands which had never been given to them at all, but which they had merely been set to govern. Indeed, this was always *the case* with the great dukedoms and

counties. In the time of Charles the Bald France was full of these ; but the dukes and counts soon considered the land as their own, defied the king, and would often not even help him in time of war. All along the sea-coast, too, the terrible Northmen were continually making their appearance, plundering and burning as usual ; and at last the kings of France left off even trying to keep them off, and offered to give them a large piece of the country, the province since called Normandy, if they would only be quiet and let alone the rest. And so a body of them came and settled there, and their leader Rollo was christened, and called Duke Robert of Normandy. The kings of France became every day less and less able to control their powerful vassals ; and the only thing they could think of to do when they wanted to be obeyed, was to give them more land, so that at last they had hardly any thing left to give.



The great-grandson of Charles the Bald had, of all his dominions, only a single town left that he could call his own, and then the nobles thought it was time to look about for another king among the great vassals; and no one was so distinguished as Hugh the Great, Duke of Neustria (the part of France between the Seine and the Loire). He was also Duke of France and Burgundy (the part between the Seine and the Meuse), and Paris was his capital. His son Hugh Capet was, therefore, made king, and from this family came the kings of France for 800 years. The unfortunate Louis XVI., who was beheaded in 1793, was of the family of Capet.

In Germany the Emperors did not succeed to the throne according to birth, but were chosen by the chiefs of the five nations,—Franks, Suabians, Bavarians, Saxons, and Lorrainers,—who *made up* the German people of that

time. This was a better plan, perhaps : at any rate, we find that the early Emperors of Germany were very much cleverer, braver men than most of the kings of France. They had plenty of hard work to do, to defend their dominions from the Hungarians and other wild tribes that were still pressing in upon them. Henry the Fowler, who lived about forty years after our great Alfred, is said to have been the first who built towns in Germany, and set up courts of justice, and encouraged various kinds of industry, and made many useful regulations. Once he rose up from a sick-bed to fight the Hungarians, and drive them out of his dominions. After his death his son Otho was chosen to succeed him. He was crowned at Rome by the Pope as Charlemagne had been, and also crowned king by the Lombards. He is generally called Otho the Great ; and he obtained the power of appointing the Pope, and for some hundreds

of years there was a constant struggle going on between the Emperors and the popes as to who should be greatest.

It was a great pity that the popes were princes and had dominions of their own ; for that prevented their attending to religious affairs as they ought to have done, and, instead of doing any good to the Church, it did a great deal of harm.

LETTER XXX.

I HAVE told you that, in the disorder that the countries of Europe got into in the ninth and tenth centuries, the clergy were often so ignorant as not to know even how to read, but we find that after this time they improved very much, and, as they lived peaceable lives, while other people were always fighting, they became, by degrees, very much more learned; indeed, all the learning that there was in those days they had, and we should know nothing about the history of the world for many hundred years, if it were not for the accounts they wrote.

Now, as they were more learned, it is not surprising that they became more powerful; for it is natural and right that those who know most should

govern those who know least. It was found, too, very convenient, as there were so few regular settled laws, and everlasting disputes about who should be king, that there should be the Pope to apply to, whom, as the head of the Church everybody minded, to settle them. As the great people applied to the Pope, those of a lower class went to the priest, who, no doubt, often gave them really good advice: but, unfortunately, as almost every one is fond of power over others, the priests and the popes soon began to like to settle every thing their own way, and have every one do as they chose, and so they got to manage everybody's affairs, and very often managed more for their own interest than any one else's; and, I am afraid, in order to make the people do as they liked, often, like the old priests of Egypt, resorted to tricks and contrivances, and pretended miracles, which encouraged superstition.

Besides the priests, that is, the clergy who performed religious services in the churches, and christened and married people, there were other religious persons, both men and women, who lived in convents, or separate, shut-up communities, and were called monks and nuns, — and these did, at first, sometimes more good, and afterwards more harm, than any of the others; and they helped very much to increase the power of the Church, as there were immense numbers of them. I believe the beginning of the convents was this: During the persecutions of the early Christians, many of them had run away from the Roman cities, and hid themselves in woods and caves, where their enemies could not find them. Some thought, too, that it was best to live alone, and so keep out of the way of a good deal of the wickedness that they saw going on around them; and as it is

easier to go out of the way of wickedness, than to try and mend it, more and more did this, and went and lived in solitary places, and passed their whole time in praying and thinking of Heaven. They said so, at least, but I am afraid what they called thinking of Heaven was often thinking of nothing ; and nothing could be more stupid and useless than the lives of some of those who were called saints.

There were some, however, who were really religious and noble-minded men and women, who gave up every enjoyment and happiness in the world, for the sake of leading what they believed to be a virtuous and pious life. These, after a time, found out their mistake, and said that the living constantly alone, and having nothing to do, instead of making them better, made them a great deal worse. When the persecutions were over, some who were of this *way of thinking* agreed to live together

in parties of about ten or twelve, and occupy themselves in cultivating the ground, in writing out books, and doing good to the poor; and at the same time, in order to avoid becoming too fond of eating, or vain of their persons, to content themselves with the poorest food and the coarsest clothing, and to pass more time than people in general did in prayer and religious thoughts.

This was the beginning of the monasteries that there were afterwards so many of, all over Europe, and of which there are still some left; and though most of them afterwards became very different from what they had been at first, in the early times they often did a great deal of good.

The monks used to go and settle in wild uncultivated countries, and not only set the people the example of a peaceful, industrious, harmless life, but became their teachers in every thing they knew. The convents, too, often

afforded a safe place of refuge for such as were pursued by fierce powerful enemies, who would have dragged them from any other shelter, but did not dare to touch them when they were under the care of those whom they supposed to be especial favourites of God.

Another circumstance that made the clergy powerful was the bad laws there were concerning criminals, or people who were accused of crimes. I must tell you a little about this, as it is a very important matter.

In the time of Charlemagne, and for some time after it, it had been among all the German nations the custom to meet once a year, or oftener, in some great open place, to agree upon certain rules or laws that were to be observed by all. Besides this, the king, and each noble on his own estate, used to sit in judgment on people who had committed crimes,—who were sometimes brought to trial, though just as

often they were not. For most offences, even robbery and murder, they had to pay a certain sum of money; and the most exact calculation was made as to how much everybody was worth, and consequently how much was to be paid for killing him—so much for a man—so much for a woman—so much for a child—so much for a broken arm or leg—for a first finger, a second—so much for a thump that made a black spot, and so much more if it made the blood come.

This is, of course, a very bad plan, because a rich man may not care at all about paying a sum of money that would quite ruin a poor one; so that, in fact, the poor man would be punished very severely, and the rich one not at all. It is a very strange thing that, even in England at the present time, these foolish and unjust laws are not quite done away with.

In the early times we are speaking

of, a poor man who could not pay a fine was sold into slavery, which is often a worse punishment than death would be.

When the judges could not make out who was guilty, they had many strange ways of trying to find out the truth. People of a low class and slaves were very often tortured, that is, put to some great pain to make them confess; a plan which, besides its cruelty, was the most stupid possible; for the greatest criminal might happen to have courage and firmness enough to refuse to speak, and one who was innocent of the crime might, if he were weak, declare himself guilty for the sake of stopping the torture. For nobles and free men, the way of deciding who was guilty was to set them to fight, which was called the "trial by battle." Whoever got the victory was said to be in the right, and whoever was beaten in *the wrong*. Sometimes great pieces of

red-hot iron were laid upon the ground, and the accused person was ordered to walk over them with bare feet, or to plunge his arm into a kettle of boiling water: and if the burn began to heal immediately afterwards, it was said the person was innocent; if not, that he was guilty, though, of course, that had nothing at all to do with his innocence or guilt, and only depended upon the state of his health. There is no doubt, too, that the priests could often manage the matter just as they liked; for they were acquainted with many secrets of chemistry, that no one else then knew any thing of, and had ways of preventing those whom they wished to save from being injured. There are several substances which, if rubbed over the skin, will prevent it from being burnt or scalded; and many tricks that now are done by conjurors who exhibit their art for money, passed in those days for miracles performed

by the power of the Almighty himself. We may imagine what awe and fear must have been felt by ignorant men of those who could do such things.

There was one more reason why the Church in those middle ages became so powerful, which strikes us in reading their history. It was almost the only situation in life then, in which the poor might escape from servitude and ill-usage. The son of a serf, if he could get taught a little in a monastery, which it was often easy to do, might if he liked become a clergyman, and have the same chance of reaching the highest places, and even becoming pope, as if he belonged to the greatest family.

In the English history, you know, the celebrated Thomas à Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, was the son of a butcher. Before his time, and in Italy, one of the most powerful and famous popes who have ever been was the son *of a carpenter.*

From all these causes put together, and from others that I will not now tell you, it happens, as I have said, that for nearly three hundred years the public affairs of Europe, as well as the private ones of almost every family, were governed mostly by the Church and the popes of Rome.

LETTER XXXI.

It was just twenty years before William the Conqueror came to England, that is, during the reign of Edward the Confessor, that this famous pope whom I mentioned just now was born. He was the son of a carpenter in Italy, was taken into a monastery to be taught, afterwards became a monk, and in course of time, as he was very clever and highly respected, was chosen by his brother monks to be their prior, and at last became pope. His own name was Hildebrand, but, as the popes always took another name, he was called Gregory VII. Having thought a great deal in his quiet monastic life about the state of the world at the time, how there was very little else to be seen anywhere *but ignorance, and violence, and war ;*

that the nobles and kings cared nothing for law or justice, and that it was only the Church that had any command over them, it seemed to him that, if the Church could be made still more powerful, it would be a great deal better for the world. The mischief that might come from that had not yet been seen, and so perhaps he did not think of it; and as he was a bold, imperious-tempered man, rather fond of commanding I dare say, he liked to think that the order to which he belonged had a right to rule all others. Well, as soon as he became pope, he wrote to all the kings of Europe, and told them plainly that they had no right to be kings at all unless the Church allowed them to be so, and that, if they did not alter many things that were wrong in their kingdoms, he would tell their subjects not to obey them. He said that as all popes were the successors of the apostle St. Peter,

all men ought to attend to what they said, as if they were the apostle St. Peter himself. The pretence for this was a certain story, I believe not a true one, that the apostle Peter had once been at Rome, and had been the first pope, or rather bishop of Rome. He said that he was to judge all men, but that no one was to judge him, that no one should ever dispute any thing that the pope commanded, or suppose that the pope could do any wrong, and a great deal more of that sort.

It happened that not long after this Gregory VII. got into a quarrel with the Emperor of Germany, Henry IV. The Emperor said he would put down the Pope, but the Pope said he would put down the Emperor, and in this dispute the Pope completely won, partly because Henry was really rather a good-for-nothing prince, whom his subjects were not at all sorry to get rid of. *After the quarrel had been going on*

for some time, the Pope said that the German people need not obey Henry any longer, and ordered him to come to Rome. At first Henry only laughed at him, but he soon found it was no laughing matter; for when he made his appearance before a great assembly of the German nobles and princes, they told him that he need not come there, for that he was not Emperor now, as he was under the Pope's bann, as it was called, and excommunicated.

This excommunication (I can't help using this long word here)—this excommunication was a terrible thing in those days. The person excommunicated was put out of all Christian society; he was not allowed to enter a church, or share in any Christian rite, and every body avoided speaking to him, or having any thing to do with him. If he died he was buried in what was called unconsecrated ground, which was thought very dreadful; for it was

supposed then that evil spirits had power over the body, and even the soul, of the person so buried. The reverence for the authority of the Church also was so great in those days, that, in addition to the misery of being an out-cast from their fellow-creatures, people so situated felt wretched, as if they had committed some great crime, when they had fallen under its displeasure; and even the few who, like the bad king John of England, had not any reverence for the authority of the Church, were obliged to fear its power. Perhaps you recollect that when first the Pope threatened him, he abused him furiously, and said that he would cut off the noses and tear out the eyes of the bishops who had been sent to him as messengers. He even sent to a Moorish sovereign in Spain, and offered to turn Mahometan if he would help him against his enemies. Yet he *submitted* afterwards in the most ser-

vile manner to the Pope—knelt down at the feet of his enemy, put his crown into his hands, and said that from that time England and Ireland should belong to the pope of Rome, and that he would only consider himself as his vassal. But this was 150 years afterwards. We must go back to the Emperor Henry IV. of Germany. The princes ended by telling him that, if in the course of a year the Pope did not take off the excommunication, they should choose another emperor.

It was then the custom for people of less rank, when they were excommunicated, to go to Rome and beg the Pope's pardon, and submit to whatever punishment he ordered, and they were usually commanded to stand several days outside a church door, bare-footed, and with nothing but a flannel shirt on; and at last a priest told them they might come into the

church, and then he made them pay some money, and gave them absolution,—that is, forgave them. Nobody, however, had ever fancied that a king would be asked to do such a thing; but they found now that this was just what Gregory had determined to require.

After many a bitter struggle with himself, Henry was obliged to submit, for he had no choice between that and losing his throne. We cannot help wondering that he did not choose that, rather than the other,—but he did not. He found himself already forsaken by all his friends.

The people whom he sent to different places to try to collect money for his journey, got together with great difficulty what was barely sufficient; and with only his faithful wife, his little son, and a very few servants, he set out on his painful and humiliating journey. Some of his enemies, however who did not at all desire that

he should be reconciled to the Pope and established on his throne again, when they heard that he had really set out on this expedition, sent soldiers to occupy the mountain roads, and prevent his passing. He had to make a long circuit, and, instead of crossing the German Alps, he tried to get into Italy by the other side, over Mount Cenis. But there, in Savoy, his mother-in-law would not allow him to go through unless he promised to give her a great piece of land.

It was in the middle of a very severe winter, and a terrible journey across the Alps; but the Emperor had no time to lose, for the year of the Bann, as it was called, was nearly out, and it was still a long way to Rome. He agreed, therefore, to her demand, and then the desolate royal party again set forth, struggling through deep snow, and over vast dreary fields of ice, and crawling, sometimes, on hands and

knees along the edge of tremendous precipices. In some places the women had to be tied up in the hides of oxen, and let down the rocks by ropes: the horses, with their legs tied together, were let down in the same manner, and several of them died. This was the way the first monarch in Europe came to beg the pardon of the Pope.

It happened that the Pope was at the castle of Canossa in Reggio, so the Emperor had no occasion to go to Rome; but this did not help him at all, for the Pope insisted on his coming in the same humble and degraded manner. Henry had to stand three days in the outer court-yard of the castle bare-footed and bare-headed, and with no other clothing than the penitent's woollen shirt, till even the Pope's own people cried out at his cruelty. He said so himself in a letter that he wrote giving an account of this strange scene. *But the Emperor's subjects in Ger-*

many were so shocked and angry at the treatment he had received, that they began to return to him, and he was soon more of a favourite with them than he had ever been before. This was the case at least with the lower orders of the people, and the cities. Many of the princes and nobles, amongst whom were those who had always been his enemies, declared they were quite disgusted with him for submitting to such a thing; and they immediately assembled and chose another emperor, who was encouraged and supported by the Pope. Then began a long bloody strife, in which every part of Germany and Italy — every city, every village, almost every family — became divided into fiercely angry parties, some for the Pope, some for the Emperor; and, in addition to the terrors of war, came, as usual, those of famine and pestilence. Henry led an army to Rome, bringing with him

another pope, — and besieged Pope Gregory VII. in his own castle on Mount St. Angelo; but he was saved by a valiant Northman or Norman, named Robert Guiscard, and taken in safety to Sicily, where he afterwards died. His death, however, did not put an end to this dreadful quarrel, which was kept up for hundreds of years, cost the lives of thousands of people, and filled every city in Italy with misery and cruelty. The party for the Popes came to be called Guelphs, and that of the Emperors Ghibellines; and by these names you will often see them mentioned in history. Sometimes the names used are “Blacks” and “Whites.” When people are inclined to quarrel, there is nothing they like better than to give party names; but it is a bad plan, for nothing is more sure to keep up the quarrel. By *degrees* the very sound of the party name *puts* people in a passion, and calls up

recollections of old anger that would otherwise be forgotten.

Pope Gregory VII. obtained his triumph over the Emperor of Germany in the middle of the eleventh century. In the middle of the twelfth, you may remember, King Henry II. of England was subjected to a still more terrible penance. He, indeed, was supposed to have been concerned in a heavy crime, — the murder of Thomas à Becket, the Archbishop of Canterbury. Still he did not directly cause it; and if the person killed had been any other than a priest, it is quite certain that, in that age, no great man, much less a king, would ever have been punished for it. There is no doubt the king himself thought it a much more terrible crime than if he had actually killed a dozen other men.

You remember that solemn journey of his, when he hurried over to England in the midst of a tempest, started

for Canterbury on horseback the moment he landed, without taking any food but bread and water, — dismounted as soon as he caught sight of the towers of the cathedral, and walked with his bare feet, cut and bleeding, on the stones to the grave of the man who had been his enemy, flung himself upon it with his face to the earth, bathed in tears, and patiently endured the humbling lashes on his naked flesh inflicted by the monks ; and all that was no mere pretence, submitted to for the sake of any worldly advantage. When he bent down his crowned head before the clergy, it was because he believed that authority was given to them above that of any earthly king, directly from God himself.

This, indeed, was the great difference in the submission made to the Church, and to any one else. It was not, in that case, to mere outward *force or power* men submitted ; but to

what they thought rightful authority, as a child might submit to a parent, so that the noblest and bravest were often the humblest in their submission.

In after-times, when people saw that it was sometimes not religion, and the doing of the will of God, that the Pope and the clergy were really anxious for, but their own power and riches, and enjoyment, — they would obey them no longer.

LETTER XXXII.

It is not my intention in these letters to relate to you the history of each separate country. I could only do that by telling you first one and then another, and, as we advance towards modern times, when so much more is known than of the early ages, my letters would in that case be a great deal too long. What I wish to do is to make you acquainted with the great events of the world's history, in which all countries have been concerned. Among the most remarkable of these were the Crusades; that is, the wars which the people of Europe carried on from the eleventh to the end of the thirteenth century with the Maho-

metans, in order to get possession of the spot where their Saviour had been buried. It was remarkable that people from all parts of Europe—who at this time spoke different languages, had scarcely any acquaintance with one another, and never met but to quarrel and fight—should now agree to join together as friends and brothers in one great undertaking, to put aside all quarrels, to sell their lands and possessions, leave their homes, undertake a long, dangerous, wearisome journey, and at the end of it engage in a war with a fierce and powerful enemy, — not for the sake of any worldly advantage, but because they believed it would be right and pleasing to God. Those who did this must have been good and noble men, however much they might be mistaken in the thing they did.

For several hundred years a custom had prevailed among Christians, of

going to Palestine, to visit the place where Jesus Christ had lived and died. The Empress Helena, the mother of Constantine, the first Emperor, you remember, who professed himself a Christian, made this journey, or pilgrimage, as it was called, and built a monument over the place where it was said the Saviour had been laid; and then more and more people went, and it began to be thought that it was a great merit to do so, and that God would attend more to prayers that were said at these places than anywhere else.

Since the conquests of the Mahometan Arabs the country had belonged to them, and their rulers the Caliphs; but it does not appear that they had now for a long while interfered with the Christians who came to Jerusalem, or done them any harm: indeed, when the Caliph Haroun-al-Raschid and *Charlemagne* sent ambassadors to one

another, the Caliph promised to be particularly friendly to the Christian pilgrims, and kept his word.

In the year 1095, however, — that, you know, was nearly three hundred years afterwards, — the pilgrims came back to their own countries, with terrible lamentations. A great war had arisen in the East: the Saracens had been driven out of Palestine, and a fierce wild people of the same race as those since called the Turks had conquered it, and were profaning, in their barbarous way, all the places that were so sacred to the feelings of Christians, and shamefully ill-using the pilgrims.

While people were thinking anxiously and sorrowfully of these things, a man named Peter — Peter the Hermit he was generally called, as he had lived long alone in a wilderness — made his appearance at Rome, and, coming before a great assembly of priests and nobles

and princes, presented a letter from the sufferers in Palestine, imploring help from their fellow-Christians in Europe. He stood there bare-headed and bare-footed, wasted with hunger and hardship, with no clothes but mere beggars' rags tied together by a rope, but holding in his hand a cross, and told of the cruel treatment of the pilgrims in so pathetic a manner that even those rough warlike men shed tears, and vowed that, cost what it would, they would go to Jerusalem and deliver the Christians from their enemies, and recover the holy sepulchre of Christ from these infidel Turks. The Pope was just then going to France, and he appointed another meeting at Clermont in Auvergne, to talk of this important matter; and so many people came that no building would contain them, and they were obliged to hold the meeting in a great open plain.

Besides bishops and nobles, princes and knights, there were multitudes of all classes of the people present. When Peter had done speaking, the Pope, too, made a speech, and promised (as it was then thought he had power to do) that whoever would join in this pious work, and go to Jerusalem, should have all his sins forgiven; and from ten thousand voices there arose a shout of "It is the will of God! It is the will of God!"

Then the Pope ordered the whole assembly to fall down on their knees, and a cardinal who was there spoke a confession in the name of all, — and the Pope forgave them their sins, and gave them his blessing; and when a bishop came and knelt before him, and asked to be allowed to go too, the Pope consented, and fastened on his shoulder a cross made of red stuff. Afterwards, all those who went put on a similar

symbol; and so, from a Latin word meaning cross, they were called Crusaders.

It was, as I have said, in the beginning a noble and religious motive that induced people to go on these Crusades; but afterwards there came to be a good many other motives mixed with it, in the minds of a great number of the people who went. With a view of getting as many as possible to go, other inducements had been offered. The common people were told that, if they would join the armies going to the Holy Land, they should be made free from the power of the lords: the lords, that, while they were there, they need pay no interest for any money they had borrowed, and indeed none of their debts; and so many nobles, who were very much in debt, put on the red cross to get away from their creditors. There were also, in every country in Europe at that time, great num-

bers of bold, restless men, who knew nothing of any trade but fighting, and who liked a rambling life, and were ready to go any where.

While the great army of the Crusaders was getting ready, under the command of Duke Godfrey of Bouillon, Count Baldwin of Flanders, and many other noble leaders, a crowd of about fifteen thousand people of the lowest class, who were too impatient to wait for the others, set out under the guidance of Peter the Hermit, without any money, and without having any idea even of how they were to get food, —set out to walk on foot, through Germany and Hungary, and all the then quite wild countries to the north of Turkey, to Palestine. As they went on, finding themselves starving, they took whatever food they could find, and then the people of the countries they were passing through, being robbed, naturally became angry, and attacked

the Crusaders, who fought again, and did still more mischief. Other bands set out from various places in the same thoughtless manner, often without having any notion where Palestine was; and altogether more than three hundred thousand people perished without ever seeing Palestine at all. The more regular army had lost great numbers by the time they reached Constantinople; and though the Emperor, who was very much frightened to see such hosts of rude warriors pouring into his dominions, helped them as fast as he could to get across the Straits into Asia, when at last they got to Jerusalem, they had not more than sixty thousand men out of two hundred and fifty thousand that they had had at first. They had had to fight and besiege cities as they came along; and they had often behaved in the most disorderly and licentious manner. Nobles who had pawned their lands and jewels,

and given up every thing they had in the world, for the sake of coming on this holy expedition, as they thought it, seemed afterwards to have forgotten what they came for, and to be thinking more of getting new lands and dominions than of anything religious; and altogether there is in the actions and the characters of those times such a wonderful mixture of what is very good and very bad, that sometimes we hardly know what to think of them. In general, we find in the people of these middle ages more beautiful heroic actions, and at the same time more atrocious crimes, than we see in our own days.

There were, however, among the Crusaders some whose characters were so noble, disinterested, and virtuous that they are worthy of serving as examples to the people of any age. Such, for instance, was a young Sicilian noble named Tancred, whom we hear

of in this first Crusade, and King Louis IX. of France, who took part in the last.

Tancred, though he was as warm-hearted and eager to engage in this holy cause as the wildest among the Crusaders, did not make his taking the cross an excuse for neglecting other duties. He gave over his inheritance to his younger brother, in case he should himself be killed in Palestine and never return; and of a large sum of money that he had, he spent only a small part on his own outfit, and shared the rest with every brother Crusader who needed it. He took no rich tents, or troops of idle attendants, or costly hunting apparatus, or luxuries of any kind for his own accommodation, as so many Crusaders of his rank did; but to every brave knight who wished to go, and had not the means, he gave a suit of armour, and a war-horse, and a *mule* for his luggage.

He was soon at the head of a numerous troop, and was about to set out joyfully with them as their leader, when it was represented to him that a more experienced leader might be better for the cause, and then he immediately resigned the command to another older man, and was the first who swore to obey him, employing himself afterwards during the march in the humbler but necessary duties of getting provisions for the army, choosing their camping places, and keeping order. One who went with him says: "He was awake when his companions slept, armed and on horseback when they were taking their ease. In the hardest season he had no tent but the sky; he gave to the hungry his food, and to the naked his cloak: not only the warriors whom he led, but all who were weak, oppressed, or in trouble, were sure of his protection, and of his money if they were poor. He was often seen toiling along on the

roughest paths, that he might give his horse to some poor woman who had been terrified by the warlike host, and lead her back in safety to her home."

As the Crusaders approached Jerusalem, after their long and weary journey, Tancred was the first to take possession of the village of Bethlehem; and then from the summit of a hill he first beheld the City of God, as it was called: separated from him only by a valley, illumined by the beams of the setting sun, there it lay at his feet. He could count the towers, the gates, the streets; he could plainly see the throng of men, and the busy movements of the garrison preparing for the expected attack. He flung himself from his horse and kissed the ground; and when the great army of the Crusaders heard that Jerusalem was in sight, they rushed forward with outstretched arms and streaming tears — knights and men-at-arms, priests, soldiers, women,

all running in wild eagerness at their utmost speed: all discord, all rivalries, all grudges, were forgotten; they embraced each other as brothers, crying, "It is the will of God! It is the will of God!"

On the evening of the 10th of July, after about a month's siege, the Crusaders took the city, and burst into it at several places at once. Amid murderous battle-cries, and shrieks of slaughtered victims, even of helpless old men, women, and children (for, with that dreadful notion of theirs that these people were the enemies of God, the Crusaders spared none), they forced their way through the narrow streets, trampling under the hoofs of their war-horses almost as many as they killed with their swords; and the streets during that dreadful night were choked with the dying and the dead. In the morning the blood-stained warriors were seen going in solemn pro-

cession, without their arms, downcast and humble ; and, instead of murderous battle-cries, there were heard hymns and expressions of penitence, and pious vows. The fierce Crusaders seemed changed into a flock of harmless pilgrims.

Once more, in this terrible scene of the taking of Jerusalem, we catch a glimpse of the noble young Tancred. It had been agreed that every leader should plant his standard on the building in Jerusalem which he first entered, and that it should then be considered as his property, and spared by the rest. Even during the heat and fury of the assault, Tancred's compassion had been awakened by the sight of a crowd of poor suppliants who had taken refuge in a mosque built on the spot where Solomon's temple had stood, and he gave them his flag as a protection. The next day it was found that this *mosque* contained immense treasures.

We hear of twenty golden and fifty silver candlesticks, of rich robes, jewels, and costly utensils, and no one for a moment disputed his right to them; but, after sending a large share to the chief commander, Godfrey of Bouillon, Tancred distributed the remainder among his companions and the poor, keeping nothing for himself. It belonged to the character of a true knight to be generous and disinterested as well as brave.

The other Crusader whom I wished to mention to you—King Louis IX. of France—was born in the time of our King John, and was the son of that prince of France whom, if you remember, the English barons, when they quarrelled with John, offered to make king of England. Louis IX. became king when he was only twelve years old; and, till he reached the age of twenty-one, his mother, who was a clever woman, though of a stern and jealous

temper, governed the kingdom for him as Regent. One of the first things we hear about Louis, after he became king, was his performing what was then considered a religious action. Some one brought to France from Jerusalem what they declared to be the crown of thorns that had been placed on the brow of our Saviour when he was led to be crucified. People were not then so much in the habit of doubting and questioning about those things as we are now; and King Louis, believing that it really was what they said, walked out bare-footed, and in a coarse common dress (as a sign of humility), to meet the Sacred Crown, as it was called, and carry the chest containing it on his shoulders into Paris.

This was what a religious person of that age would have thought it his duty to do; but King Louis had other duties to perform that were not so easy. *Besides* many wars to carry on with


riotous and powerful nobles, who would not obey any law, and cared not a pin about justice, he very earnestly wished and tried to improve many great evils that he saw going on — such as the custom of private war, and the trial by battle, by both of which any one who was strong might do any harm he liked to any one who was weak.

King Louis IX. was the first who began to do away with this wrong and stupid practice, and introduced the plan we have now of hearing witnesses, and trying to find out who was really the guilty person. He could not, indeed, completely put an end to this and other bad customs; but he did all he could, and never, as long as he lived, left off trying to reform whatever he thought wrong or unjust.

Perhaps he might have done more, but that his time and thoughts were so much taken up with going on the Crusades, which he considered to be serving

God and doing his duty. He suffered terribly on these expeditions, was taken prisoner at one time by the Turks, and caught several dangerous and painful illnesses; but he was always patient, gentle, resigned to whatever happened to him, and equally brave in battle as in resisting every evil doer, or in bearing the hardships of the war. In all his affairs with other kings, he never seems to have considered, as so many have always done, what would be most likely to increase his own riches or power, but only what was right, and just, and generous. In his time those dreadful quarrels were going on between the Pope and the Emperor of Germany; but whenever Louis joined in them, it was only to try and make peace.

Before he set out on the Crusades, he sent people into all parts of his kingdom to ask whether any one had



cause to complain of any injustice being done him, either by himself or the kings before him, and he gave orders, if they had, to make them amends directly.

The poor peasants whose corn was trampled down by the fierce nobles, the merchant whose goods had been seized, poor women who had none to help them—all found a friend in King Louis. He was once very near hanging a powerful noble—one Enguerraud de Couci—who had killed some poor boys for taking his game. Nobles of that time thought nothing of killing a peasant. But the king ordered him to Paris, and when he came threw him into prison; and though the King of Navarre, the Archbishop of Rheims, the Duke of Burgundy, and crowds of other nobles, came to beg for his release, Louis insisted on his being brought to trial. De Couci claimed to be allowed

the trial by battle; but the king refused to permit such a mockery of justice. At last, when the whole assembly sunk on their knees, and implored for his pardon, the king, feeling, it seems, some uncertainty as to what he ought to do, gave way to their entreaties, saying, however, "Enguerraud, if I knew certainly that God commanded it, you should die, and not all France should save you." He inflicted, however, on the criminal such heavy fines of money, to be employed for charitable purposes, that one of the nobles said saucily, "I suppose, after this, he'll have nothing left but to hang us."

That a noble should be hung for murdering a peasant seemed then to people in general as much out of the question as we should think it for killing a dog or a cat. But King Louis was really a Christian, and therefore thought every human life precious. I wish it were

possible for me to tell you more about this good and great man ; but you will some day read his life more at length : and we have still so many things to speak of, that I must say no more of him now.

LETTER XXXIII.

WHEN people set about any thing with a good motive, it seldom fails to turn out well somehow or other, though not always in the way they have expected. So it was with the Crusades. The Crusaders entirely failed in doing what they intended. They took indeed the city of Jerusalem and a great deal of Syria and Asia Minor besides, and they set up for a short time what they called the kingdom of Jerusalem. But they lost all again. Almost as soon as they left off sending armies to those countries, they were driven out of them, and they did not keep possession of a single yard of the land which it had cost the lives of so many men, and such *immense* sums of money, to gain.

But if we follow the course of events a little further, we shall find that the Crusades nevertheless had good and wonderful consequences, more so almost than any other event in the history of Europe. In the first place, nothing served so much to recover the greater part of the people, — the peasants, the working men, the tradesmen, and merchants, — from the state of slavery and misery into which they were sinking. I have said what a wretched state the country people who cultivated the land were in; and, before the Crusades, the inhabitants of the towns and cities were not in a much better. The city mostly belonged to some great lord who ordered every thing according to his will. The inhabitants could not sell the things that they had made, they could not send for goods from other countries, or send their own to them, without his permission, which he would *sometimes* refuse, and *sometimes* make

them pay an enormous price for. They could not marry without his consent ; they were obliged to render him all sorts of services without any payment ; and, in whatever they tried to do, they were hindered by some foolish and tyrannical little law of his making.

But, when the Crusades began, the lords found that they wanted money, and they were then willing to make agreements with the people in the towns to do away with these vexatious laws, if they would undertake to give them what they wanted. Sometimes the cities even got the privilege of making their own laws, and became quite free. Almost all the great cities of Italy had in this way bought their freedom : and as such numbers of people came to them now, on their way to the Holy Land, and mostly wanted to buy things before embarking,—and the ships also that carried the crusading armies, *belonged to merchants in Venice, Genoa,*

or Pisa,—from the profits of all this trade the citizens got very rich, and began to erect those beautiful churches and other fine buildings for which the Italian cities are still so famous.

When they found, too, how pleasant and advantageous it was to carry on their trade, and to manage their affairs, without being interfered with as they used to be by the nobles, they resolved to keep their independence, even if they had to fight for it, and never let themselves be made slaves of again. They built strong walls round their towns, and made the citizens learn the use of warlike weapons, that they might be able to defend themselves. And as the roads were so unsafe, they agreed to join together and keep a number of armed men, to protect their goods from robbers. In Germany, the two cities of Hamburg and Lubeck did the same thing, and in the course of about twenty years sixty other towns had joined them.

Every town contributed some money to pay the expenses of keeping soldiers and sailors, and of taking houses in London, in Russia, in Flanders, and other countries, where they might all carry on their business, and for whatever else was wanted. And by associating together in this friendly manner, instead of opposing one another, they became so rich and powerful, that even kings were glad to enter into agreements with them, and no one cared to interfere with the trade of any of their towns. This powerful society was called the Hanseatic League; and other cities in the south of Germany followed the example, and formed another such society, called the Rhine League.

The Crusades put an end, in a great measure, to those abominable private wars that had been such a cause of misery to every country, hindered every kind of industry and useful work, and *did much more harm than if the same*

number of men had been killed in fighting with a foreign enemy. When people are not tolerably sure that they will not be robbed of what they can make, or what they can save, they will not take much trouble to make or save any thing ; and if they do not save a part of what they earn, they can never improve their condition. To the rude ignorant nobles, who had lived shut up in their castles, except when they left them to hunt or to fight, it was very useful to travel through so many different countries, and see the cities of Asia and Constantinople, which had escaped the destruction that had come upon Rome, and where the remains of all the Roman learning were preserved, and whose merchants carried on trade with the most distant countries, even India and China, for silks, and spices, and all kinds of costly productions quite unknown in Europe. The Crusaders had now plenty of opportunity

of comparing their own manners and customs with those of more educated and refined people. Even from their enemies — the Saracens — they could learn a great deal; for they, when their first furious wars were over, had taken pains to learn the sciences known in the countries they conquered, and translated into their language Greek books on medicine, geometry, and astronomy.

There were now, for two hundred years, hundreds of thousands of people constantly passing backwards and forwards between the east and the west of Europe, and ships going about to all the ports on the Mediterranean Sea, so that what was known in one place spread to another. For instance, the Arabs had found out something of the nature of the magnetic needle; and in the year 1302 an Italian, of the name of Gioia, made the first mariners' compass, which enables sailors to find their

way, in the darkest nights, across the vast pathless ocean; one of the most useful and wonderful instruments ever made. Before this invention ships could hardly venture out of sight of land, and now, you know, they can find their way easily to the other side of the world, even if they should never see land at all on their way.

After that a still more valuable invention was made; one of the most valuable, I think, that was ever made since the world began, namely, the art of Printing. It is hardly necessary to say much of the use of books. You know they contain the materials of all knowledge, and, consequently, the means of all improvement.

The honour of this great invention belongs to the Germans; and the first printing was done by a man of the name of John Guttenberg, in the town of Maintz, on the Rhine, in 1450; but, *as it has often happened with really*

great and important events, it attracted but little notice at first; but as soon as people began to understand what an immense advantage it would be, the knowledge of it spread all over Europe. You may fancy how dear and scarce books must have been when there was no way of getting a copy of one but by writing it all out. At the beginning of the fourteenth century there were in the Royal Library at Paris only four Latin authors. We hear of a prior and his monks of the convent of Rochester declaring that they will, every year, utter the most solemn and terrible curses against any one who shall offer to steal, or even to hide, a certain volume of Aristotle that they had got.

In those days, it sometimes cost almost a small fortune to buy a book; and if ever one was given away, a number of people of consequence were called together as witnesses; many conditions made as to how those who

were to receive it were to take sufficient care of it; and, altogether, such a wonderful fuss was made about it, that it is evident such a gift was thought of as much, or more, consequence than a great estate.

We smile at this now that books are so cheap; but we must not forget that things which do not sell for much money are often of quite inestimable worth. We do not buy air and sunshine, yet they are worth more to us than anything we can buy. The whole world, you know, is not worth anything to us in comparison with our own souls; and a good book is the food and nourishment of the soul, feeding it with thoughts, as our bodies are fed with food.

Before the invention of Printing, private people who were not very rich could never think of buying books. You and I, I am afraid, would never have got one.

LETTER XXXIV.

THERE is nothing in which the knowledge we possess now more exceeds that of former times than in geography. The ancients fancied that a great part of the earth was entirely unfit for human beings to live in. In the parts called the frigid zone, they thought people must be frozen; and in those between the tropics, burnt to death by the heat of the sun, even in attempting to cross them, so that, if there were any habitable countries beyond those regions, we could never know of them.

For more than a thousand years scarcely any progress was made in this respect; but when men had once been induced to go as far as Palestine, they were easily tempted to go further.

After the Crusades were over, travellers set out for the most distant countries that they could hear of, sometimes with the intention of converting the inhabitants to Christianity, and sometimes for the sake of trading with them; and they brought back wonderful accounts, partly true and partly false, but which excited people's curiosity, and set them thinking. They paid more attention to geography than they had ever done before; they built their ships better, and became more anxious to acquire all kinds of knowledge.

How many good things might have been done but for the wars that broke out, and prevented every improvement! and this was the more grievous, as they were wars in which we can take no interest, for they were only about who should be king. For a hundred and twenty years the English and French were fighting, in the wars

which began between Edward III. of England and Philip IV. of France. Edward said he had a right to be king of France, because his mother, Isabella, had been the sister of the last three kings, and there was no son to succeed. His rival, Philip, who was then regent, said, No: it was the law in France, that women could not be reigning queens; and that, as Isabella had no right to the throne herself, she could not give it to her son. If he was not the son of the last king, he was the grandson, and so he had a right to the crown.

Edward sent an army to France, in which his son, the Black Prince, and the English soldiers performed many brave actions, especially at the two famous battles of Crecy and Poitiers. But one cannot help grieving that these valiant men should have had to waste their lives in such a worthless *cause*. A hundred years afterwards,

you know, King Henry V. gained another celebrated victory, that of Agincourt, in which, with quite a little band of English soldiers, he defeated and drove away a French army that was six times as numerous. We must admire the noble behaviour and courage of the soldiers; but we have no satisfaction in hearing of such victories, for no human being could be the better for any of them; and we can only wish these fine fellows had been allowed to stay in their own country, instead of being dragged over to be a torment to the French people. The son of Henry V., who was born the heir of all this grandeur, and crowned king of France and England when he was only a year old, led a most miserable life, and died at last in prison; most likely he was murdered.

It was in the reign of this poor Henry VI. that there began in England those wars between the two fa-

milies of York and Lancaster, called the Wars of the Red and White Roses, that did such dreadful mischief in England, and went on for thirty years. One is quite weary of reading the account of these useless, wasteful, cruel struggles, in which one does not care at all who gets the victory. This war of the Roses, you know, was all about who was the nearest relation to Edward III., so as to have most right to be king of England.

The one of the many wars that took place during this period which is best worth remembering, is that of the Swiss people against the cruel and tyrannical governors set over them by the Austrians. You have heard the story of William Tell, most likely, many times; so I will not repeat it here: and many equally noble, heroic actions were performed by the Swiss people, which I shall like to tell you of some day. *They succeeded in making themselves*

free, and for many years were, I think, the happiest people in Europe: and they are still comfortable and prosperous; but I think they have not sufficiently remembered that all things made by men want mending and altering from time to time, and laws, and customs, and forms of government require repairs, just as houses and articles of furniture do. Many laws and institutions of the Swiss, which were very good and suitable in the beginning of the fourteenth century, are not so for the time we live in.

I must also mention to you, among the remarkable events of the fifteenth century, the taking of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453, when the last successor of the Roman Emperors, Constantine IX., was killed. Not only had the Crusaders been driven out of Palestine, but they had been pursued into Europe; and now this beautiful city, as well as Athens and the whole of

Greece, was seized upon by people who were then not much better than savages. Great numbers of learned men, who had been living in these countries, made their escape, and came to Europe, bringing with them nearly all the writings of the ancient Greeks that we have, and which were of very great use.

We are quite glad to find that, at last, history has something better to tell us of than fighting. The invention of the art of printing in the middle of the fifteenth century, and the discovery of America towards the end of it, make an entire change in the history of the world.

I told you of the travellers who, after the Crusades, undertook long land journeys to Eastern countries never before visited by Europeans; but these were so tedious, that people were led to ask, whether it might not *be possible* to reach India and China

by the way of the sea? In the middle of the fourteenth century, with the help of the newly-invented compass, some Spaniards ventured out into the Atlantic Ocean further than they had ever been before, and discovered the Canary Islands; but they did not venture to go on. Fifty years after this, a Portuguese captain sailed along the coast of Africa, and got far enough to see a great headland, which he thought must be the end of it. This he called the Cape of Storms, because of the dreadful tempests he had met with there, and which had prevented him from going any further. But when he came back to Portugal, and told the king so, he said the captain ought rather to have called it the Cape of Good Hope, for there was now good hope that the way to India was found. These things set every one thinking about discovering new countries; but no one thought *so much*, or so well, as a man named

Christopher Columbus, an Italian, whose wife was the daughter of one of those sailors who had been in the Portuguese voyages, and who had written down for himself very exact accounts of them. Columbus thought a long time, without saying much, about the shape of the earth, and the reasons there were for thinking that, by going out into the Atlantic Ocean, and sailing on towards the west, he should come to land. When he felt quite sure he began to speak of his plan, and try and get some one to send him out in a ship, promising, if they did, he would find for them some new country. First he went to his native city of Genoa, but they would have nothing to do with him. Then he applied to the King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain, but they kept him five years waiting for an answer ; and *when the answer came, it was a refusal. They had, they said, ordered a number*

of learned men to consult about the plan of Columbus, and these learned men had decided that it was all nonsense. One said, that if there had been anything to discover in those regions, the ancients would have discovered it: another, that if Columbus sailed so far over the round globe, and got down to the bottom of the watery hill, he would never get up again: a third, one cannot guess why, said the plan was presumptuous and wicked. Besides this, the king and queen said they had no money to spare, for they wanted more than they had to carry on a war with the Moors.

Poor Columbus! You will read some day, in his Life, the account of the many attempts he made, of the many bitter disappointments he had, of the long, long weary waiting and hoping, seemingly in vain; while some people said he was foolish, and some that he was mad. At

last, however, his patience and perseverance met with their reward. The prior of the convent where he had placed his children to be educated became convinced that Columbus was in the right, and, watching a favourable opportunity, when a great victory had been gained over the Moors, and the Queen Isabella was in good humour, he persuaded her to be of his opinion; and on the third of August, 1492, three little vessels were seen leaving the coast of Spain, under the command of Columbus, to cross that boundless waste of waters in search of a new world. The crews of the ships were terrified when they lost sight of the last land, and found themselves sailing on and on towards the west, and that there was still nothing to be seen around them but sky and water; and when day after day, week after week passed, and no signs of the promised land appeared, they grew angry and

mutinous, and threatened Columbus, that, if he did not turn back, they would throw him overboard. Most likely they would have done it, but that they thought they would not know how to get back without him. Day and night, almost, he stood upon the deck, with his sounding-lead in his hand and his instruments ready, watching every little circumstance in the appearance of the sky or the water that might show whether land was near; but still no land was to be seen. At last the sailors got quite furious, and then Columbus, perhaps almost despairing now himself, promised that, if in three days more the land did not appear, he would give up all his long-cherished hopes, and go back to Spain. On the very next day, as some of the crew stood gazing on the water, they saw floating towards them a branch of a tree with red berries, and, at the same time, there alighted on the mast

some birds that live on land. Joyfully were these signs hailed ; but again the sun set, and still no land was to be seen. But just before midnight a cry, a shout, was heard from the almost despairing wanderers — “Land ! land !” What sound could have been so welcome ? A light had been seen quite distinctly moving along, as if carried by some person on a shore. The men rushed into each other’s arms, quite wild with joy, and ready to fall at the feet of Columbus, whom the day before they had been inclined to murder. They wept, they sung hymns of thanksgiving ; no eye was closed in sleep during that night ; and at the early dawn a beautiful green island lay full in sight. It was one of the Bahama Islands ; the one called Guanahani by the natives, and by Columbus St. Salvador. The real continent of America was found afterwards.

With their flags flying and martial

music sounding, and in the gayest dresses they could muster, the Spaniards got into a boat, and rowed towards the shore, where all the inhabitants of the island were crowding down to gaze at them, partly in fear, partly in wonder and admiration, for they took them for gods. The people of the island were quite naked, and of a reddish colour, like copper. They knew nothing of any art, not even that of hunting or fishing, but lived contentedly on the roots and fruits and Indian corn that grew wild in their island; and they had never heard of such a thing as clothes. They were delighted, poor things, at the coming of the Spaniards, little thinking what misery it was to bring upon them; and, when they saw them about to build a fort, helped them to get together the materials with the innocent glee of little children. The bits of gold and the pearls that they wore as ornaments (for they

had ornaments, though they had no clothes), they willingly exchanged for glass beads and pins; and they freely gave their invaders a share of whatever they had.

In a letter which Columbus wrote to the King and Queen of Spain, he describes the kind sympathy the people of Cuba showed in the distress of the Spaniards when one of their ships was wrecked. He says, "The king, having been informed of our misfortune, expressed great grief, and sent aboard people in many large canoes. We soon unloaded the ship of every thing that was upon the deck, as the king gave us great assistance; he himself, with his brothers and relations, took all possible care that every thing should be properly done, both aboard and on shore. And from time to time he sent some of his relations, weeping, to beg of me not to be dejected, for he would give me all he had. I can as-

sure your Highnesses that so much care would not have been taken in securing our effects in any part of Spain; and all our property was put together in one place, near his palace, until the houses which he wished to prepare for keeping it were emptied. He immediately placed a guard of armed men, who watched during the whole night; and those on shore lamented, as if they had been much interested in our loss. The people are so affectionate, so tractable, so peaceable, that I swear to your Highnesses that there is not a better race of men, nor a better country, in the world. They love their neighbour as themselves."

Except the Mexicans, who were in a different state, nearly all the people of the new countries showed this gentle and amiable character, and they were particularly attentive and submissive to the Spaniards, because, until their horrible ill-behaviour undeceived them,

the Indians took them, as I have said, for beings superior to men.

They were very much surprised at the eagerness the Spaniards showed for gold; and the people of the islands first visited, when questioned, made them understand, by signs, that they got it from a place to the south-west, the direction which Columbus afterwards took, and discovered what he had been in search of,—the great continent of South America.

It was near the mouth of the Orinoco river, at the country now called Guiana, that he first saw it; and though he could not then go any further, for the little ship in which he was had been almost shattered to pieces, he was sure, from the immense body of water that the river brought down to the sea, that it could not come out of an island, but must have flowed through vast regions, and received

many tributary streams. As neither he nor any one else knew of the Pacific Ocean, he supposed that this country was the eastern part of India, and for this reason he called it and the islands the West Indies, and its inhabitants Indians. You will wonder, perhaps, how it came to be called America. I believe it happened in this way. An Italian nobleman of the name of Americus Vespucci, who made several voyages to it, after it was discovered by Columbus, wrote a clever and learned book about it, in Latin of course, as learned books were always then, and as no exact name had been given to the countries discovered by Columbus, people found it convenient to call it *Terra America*, meaning the country Americus spoke of, for no other book had been written about it. Americus himself had no intention of doing any injustice to Columbus. If he had, it

would not have been the worst injustice or ingratitude that poor Columbus had to bear.

You may suppose there was a great rejoicing at the court of Spain when he went back, and told them what he had found. When his ship was seen approaching the shore, the people ran down in crowds to see it, and to wonder at the curious things, and the unknown animals, and strange-looking men that he had brought with him. They rung the bells of the town, they fired the cannon; the inhabitants followed him and his companions in a solemn procession to the church, to return thanks to God for his success. The king and queen received him, seated on a magnificent throne, in their royal robes, and had a chair placed for him near themselves. They made him and all his family nobles; *they* commanded that he should be

treated with the respect paid to persons of the highest rank ; they appointed him High Admiral and Viceroy of all the seas, continents, and islands of which he had made them the sovereigns, for they now considered all as theirs. His children too, and his heirs for ever, were to be viceroys after him ; and he was to have one-tenth part of the profits of all the productions of those countries, and of the trade with them. Very fine promises, —if they had only kept them !

The fame of Columbus's voyage soon spread all over Europe ; and everywhere excited wonder and joy. Hundreds of people, of all ranks and from every country, were eager to set out to see this new world beyond the ocean ; and a fleet of seventeen large ships was soon ready to sail from Spain. But first Ferdinand and Isabella were anxious to prevent any

other nation from interfering with what they considered as their property; and the power of the Pope was still so great, that it was thought better to apply to him to give them leave to take possession of it.

It was still supposed that the Pope had a right over all the kingdoms of the earth, even though it happened that the man who was Pope then, Alexander VI., was known to be as wicked a man as there was in the world. He had no objection to give away what was not his to give, so he readily agreed to what they asked; but at the same time, to prevent the Portuguese from being jealous, he said he would divide the new world between them and the Spaniards. He would suppose a line drawn across the world, from pole to pole, a hundred leagues west of the Azores, and that all to the *west* of this line should belong to the *Spaniards*, and all to the east of it to

the Portuguese. This was how the Portuguese afterwards got the great empire of Brazil.

It would take me too long to tell you all that happened afterwards. The Spaniards, in their greediness for gold, soon began to ill-use the poor timid natives most shamefully, and at last reduced them to complete slavery, making them labour incessantly, and robbing them of every thing they had. Columbus was not to blame, for he tried all he could to prevent this ; but when the Spanish king and queen found that he did not send them as much gold as they expected, they listened to calumnies and falsehoods that had been invented against him by those who were envious of his success ; and at last they were so ungrateful as to send some one to turn him out of his place, and bring him and his brother back to Europe in chains. The captain of the ship who brought him over

was so ashamed of it, that when he got out to sea he wanted to take the chains off, but Columbus would not let him. He said every one should see how the King of Spain rewarded the man who had discovered a new world for him. In fact, Ferdinand and Isabella were ashamed too when they saw him, and did order the chains to be taken off, and even sent him a little money; but they did not make him viceroy again; and they seemed quite to have forgotten all the fine things they had promised him. For some years they entirely neglected him; and in the meantime they insisted on having more and more gold from America, and the poor natives were treated consequently with more and more cruelty. At last the king thought he would make Columbus do something more for him, and so he sent him out on another voyage, but it turned out a very unfortunate one. They met with dread-

ful storms, and the ships that they had given him were such bad ones, that one was soon entirely wrecked, and the others nearly so. He steered for Hispaniola (that is the island now called Hayti), which he had himself discovered, and where he had been High Admiral, but the man who had been put in his place actually refused to let him land. He managed to get to the coast of Jamaica, and then the vessels quite went to pieces; and if it had not been for the courage of two of his sailors, who went a ten days' voyage in a little open boat made out of the trunk of a tree, and got a ship to come and fetch him, he might have been starved to death there, and we should never have heard any more of him.

Perhaps it would not have been a much more sorrowful end for this great man than what really took place. During the eight months that the two sailors were away, the other Spaniards

behaved shamefully. They brutally ill-used the Indians, and rebelled against the authority of Columbus, so that he and his brother were obliged to have a regular fight with them. When, at last, he got back to Spain, worn out with fatigue and very ill, he found that the queen, Isabella, was dead. She had been a better friend to him than Ferdinand ever was, and now Columbus had less hopes than ever of obtaining justice.

He begged the king only to give him back his titles, that it might be seen he did not deserve disgrace; and then he would give up all the great fortune that had been promised him, and even the money that was owing to him. When the king would not do this, Columbus begged that he would at least do something for his son; but Ferdinand made various shabby excuses, behaved to him in a cold and unkind manner, and put off, *from time to time*, giving him any an-

swer, till the death of Columbus saved him from any more trouble. He had taken care, before he died, to provide as well as he could for every one connected with him ; to have every little debt paid ; and he had desired that the fetters that had been put on him, when he was brought home from America as a prisoner, might be put into his coffin, and buried with him.

There is hardly a sadder story in all the history of the world than that of the conduct of the Spaniards in the new countries ; and as we often see in private life that money obtained by unjust and wicked means does no good to the person getting it, and seldom procures for them even worldly prosperity, so it was now with Spain. You must read its history to know exactly how it happened ; but from the time when the vast treasures of gold and silver which were obtained by enslaving and torturing the people of Peru

and Mexico, were poured into it, its greatness, its happiness, even its wealth, began to decline, and, in spite of its being by nature a most rich and beautiful country, it became one of the poorest and most miserable in Europe. More real advantages were obtained from the discovery of America by other nations ; for when the Spaniards, in the most jealous and selfish manner, shut them out from the new countries, and would not even let their ships come into the ports, they set out to try and make discoveries for themselves, and exchange what their country produced for the productions of the countries they visited, which did good to both. If the Spaniards, instead of robbing the Indians of their gold, had given them goods in exchange for it, it would have encouraged these people to be industrious and clever, and it would have been a thousand times better for *them*, as well as for the Indians. We

generally get more happiness by the active exertion we make to obtain the things we want, than by the things themselves; and money can do nothing for our happiness after we have once got enough to make us comfortable in the situation of life to which we have been accustomed.

Here, I believe, we must for the present close our little historical panorama; for the history of the world from the discovery of America to the present time is much too extensive and complicated a subject for us to enter upon. It must be studied in the history of each separate country; and it will be better, I think, to put it off till you are several years older.

On the whole, when we look back along this period, we cannot but see that great progress has been made; that men are in general wiser, and I hope better and happier, than they were in the old times. They are cer-

tainly more orderly and well-behaved; for even those who, perhaps, would not love goodness for itself, have mostly found out how foolish bad conduct is, and how much suffering they bring on themselves, for the sake of a little momentary indulgence.

Of the other, better sort of goodness, when people do right because they love the right, and without thinking of any advantage to themselves, I suppose there may be as much in one age as another. God only can tell that!

The powers of Nature are now every day coming more and more under our command. Air, and water, and steam, and the still more mysterious and wonderful powers of electricity and magnetism, are made to work for us, and do our bidding, like obedient servants. We are better fed and clothed; our houses are built in a more healthy and pleasant manner; we have better furniture and household utensils, and all

kinds of conveniences which people in old days never thought of. We have gas-lights to do away with darkness in our streets, and railroads to carry us from one end of the country to the other in a few hours, and steam-ships to take us, in spite of contrary winds, to the most distant parts of the world. We have newspapers to tell us what is going on all over the world, and books, which enable us to share in the thoughts of the best and wisest people who have ever lived, so plentiful and cheap, that almost every one who is able to read can get them. I wish I could say *quite* every one, and also that there was no man or woman who could not read. But that, I hope, will come too, in time. We must never forget that knowledge is at the bottom of all other improvements. These powers of Nature, this steam and electricity, were in existence in the first ages of the world as they are now ; but they were

of no use to man. For want of knowledge, the people who lived then could not make them serve their purposes; and some of the grandest appearances of Nature, like thunderstorms and eclipses, only frightened them.

Parts of the earth which had been desert since the creation of the world are now becoming inhabited by industrious, civilised men. Nations are mostly more busy in thinking how they shall manage their own affairs than in finding excuses to attack others; and though we cannot yet hope that there will be no more wars, I think it is certain wars will not now be undertaken on such foolish and wicked pretences as they formerly were, and the lives of whole generations of men chiefly employed in doing mischief to each other.

The friendly acquaintance between different nations which is brought about by commerce, in which each helps the other to what it wants, is

constantly increasing. The numbers of what are called the middle classes—that is, of those who are rich enough for all reasonable comfort, without having the means of living in hurtful idleness—are increasing with the increase of trade, by which they mostly live. The working people are, indeed, in most countries, still far from being as comfortable as we would wish them; but I hope they will be before long. For years past it has been the thing that many of our wisest and best men and women have been thinking of more than anything else; and now, lately, God has come to our help in a wonderful manner. Whatever plans were tried to make the condition of the poor better, they always failed hitherto, because there were too many of them for what they had to live upon. There were more working people than were wanted, more than could get employed; and if seven or eight had to live upon what

was only enough for one or two, of course the cleverest plans could not prevent them from being very poor and miserable.

But now, all at once, Providence allows people to find out that, in some distant countries, where there are yet very few inhabitants, there are heaps and heaps of gold to be had for the digging; and so hundreds and thousands of poor men and women, who were starving here in Europe, and grieving when another child was born to them, because they had not food enough for those they had already, are going off to where there is plenty of hard work to be done, and plenty of money to pay for it. Both those who go and those who are left at home will be, I do not doubt, in a few years, better off than working people have ever been since the world began.

The discovery of gold in California and Australia is the last great event in

the history of the world, for it is one that concerns not one country only, but all, from the many changes it will occasion. We cannot yet tell what all its consequences will be, but we know that they are in the hands of God, and that, when the wisdom of men fails, he is watching over and will provide for us.

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THE EARLIEST
(RECKONING FROM THE BEGINNING

	PALESTINE, &c.	GREECE.
A. M. 2000	Inhabited by Philistines, Canaanites, Amalekites.	Original Inhabitants, Pelasgians.
	Abraham.	Cecrops.
	Jacob.	Danaus, Cadmus, &c.
	The Israelites go to Egypt.	The Argonauts.
	Moses.	
	The Exodus, or Going out, from Egypt.	The Siege of Troy.
	Saul.	
	David.	
	Solomon.	
3000	Division into the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah.	Homer. Lycurgus.
		Solon.
	Captivity of the Jews in Babylon.	
3450	Return from Babylon.	

HISTORICAL PERIOD. OF THE HUMAN RACE.)

EGYPT.	ASSYRIA.	ITALY AND EUROPE.
Menes.	Ninus and Semiramis.	
Sesostris.		Etruscans, &c
		Celts.
	Sardanapalus.	Rome built.
	Nebuchadnezzar.	Kings in Rome.
	Destruction of Nineveh.	
	Cyrus.	
	Persian Empire.	

	ITALY.	GREECE, MACEDON.
A. M.		
3487	Tarquin Family driven out. King Porsenna's attack.	
	Quarrels of Patricians and Plebeians.	Marathon.
3500		Thermopylae. Salamis.
	First War with Carthage, 3710. Carthage destroyed, 3337. Civil Wars. — Julius Caesar.	Alexander the Great.
3983	The Roman Empire.	
	THE CHRISTIAN ERA.	
		A. D.
	Augustus - - - -	1
	Tiberius - - - -	14
	Caligula - - - -	37
	Claudius - - - -	41
	Nero - - - -	54
	Galba - - - -	68
	Otho - - - -	69
	Vitellius - - - -	
	Vespasian - - - -	79
	Titus - - - -	
	Domitian - - - -	81
	Nerva - - - -	96
	Trajan - - - -	98
	Adrian - - - -	117
	Antoninus Pius - - -	138

PERSIA.	EGYPT, JUDEA, ASSYRIA.	
<p>Darius Hystaspis, 3463. Xerxes, 3497.</p> <p>Darius 3rd, 3648. Darius 4th, 3654.</p>	<p>The Birth of Christ. The Crucifixion. The Apostles lived.</p> <p>Persecution of Christians.</p> <p>Destruction of Jerusalem.</p>	<p>Julius Cæsar in Britain.</p> <p>Romans in Britain.</p> <p>Caledonian Wall built.</p>

THE ROMAN EMPIRE.

A. D.		ITALY, GAUL, BRITAIN, SPAIN, GREECE, ASIA MINOR.	
188	Marcus Aurelius - -	161	{ Saxons appear in Germany. Goths on the Danube.
	Lucius Verus - -		
	Commodus - - -	180	
	Pertinax and Julianus	193	
	Septimus Severus -	193	
	200 Caracalla and Geta -	211	
	Macrinus - - -	217	
	Heliogabalus - -	218	
	Alexander Severus -	222	Picts and Scots in Britain.
	Maximinus - - -	235	
	The Two Gordians -	236	Franks appear on the Rhine.
	Maximus and two others	237	
	Gordian Junior - -	238	
	Philip the Arabian -	244	
	Decius - - -	249	
	Gallus Hostilianus -	251	
	Volusianus - - -		
	Emilianus and two others	254	
	Gallienus - - -	260	
	Claudius II. - -	268	
276	Aurelian - - -	270	
	Tacitus - - -	275	
	Florianus and Probus -	276	
	Carus - - -	282	

THE ROMAN EMPIRE.

A. D.		ITALY, GAUL, BRITAIN, SPAIN, GREECE, ASIA MINOR.	
300	Diocletian - - -	A. D. 284	
	Diocletian and Maximianus - - - }	286	Great Persecution of Christians.
	Constantine Chlorus and Galerius Maximus - }	304	
	Constantine the Great	306	The Emperor becomes Christian.
	Constantine II. - -	337	
	Julian - - - -	361	Beginning of the Great Migration of Barbarians, 350.
	Jovian - - - -	363	
	Valentinian and Valens	364	
	Gratian, Valentin, and Theodosius - - }	375	
	Honorius - - -	395	Alarick the Goth.
400	Valentinian III. - -	424	Romans leave Britain.
	Maximus - - -	455	Saxons come.
	Avitus - - - -	456	Attila the Hun
	Majorianus - - -	457	
	Severus - - - -	461	
	Anthemius - - -	467	
	Olybrius - - -	472	
	Glycerius - - -	473	
	Julius Nepos - -	474	
	Romulus Augustulus -	476	The last Emperor of Rome.
476			The beginning of the Middle Ages.

THE EARLIER

		ENGLAND.	
A. D.		A. D.	
732	Victory of Charles Martell over the Arabs.	732	<i>Saxon Heptarchy.</i>
800			A. D.
			828
			838
			857
			890
			866
	Northmen in England.		872
900			900
	Northmen go to Greenland, Iceland, and perhaps North America.		925
			941
			948
			955
			969
			975
			978
			1016
1000	Northmen in Italy.		1017
			1036
			1039
			1041
			1066
			1066
	Norman Conquest of England.		1067
1100	Crusades - - -	1095	1100
	Second Crusade		1135
	Third Crusade - -	1150	1154
	Ireland conquered by the English.		
	Fourth Crusade - -	1190	1189
	Fifth Crusade - -	1191	1199
1200			1216
	Crusaders take Constantinople - - -	1204	
	Sixth Crusade - - -	1248	
1272	Seventh Crusade.		1272

MIDDLE AGES.

FRANCE.		GERMANY.		ITALY.	
			A. D.		A. D.
Charles Martell.		Charlemagne - - -	768		
		Louis the Pious.			
Charles the Bald.		Louis.		Lothaire.	
Louis the Stammerer					
Louis III.					
Charles the Fat.					
Eudes.		Henry the Fowler -	920		
Charles the Simple.		Otho the Great -	936		
Rodolph.					
Louis IV.					
Lothaire.					
Louis V.					
	A. D.				
Hugh Capet - -	987				
Robert I. the Wise -	996				
Henry I. - -	1031				
Philip I.		Henry IV. - -	1056		
Louis VI.				Gregory VII.	1073
Louis VII.					
Philip Augustus -	1180				
Louis VIII. the Lion	1223				
Louis IX. - -	1226				
Philip III. the Bold	1270	Frederick Barbarossa	1152	Adrian IV.	
		Frederick II. - -	1212		
				Innocent III.	

THE LATER

A. D.		A. D.	ENGLAND.	A. D.
1273				
1300	Invention of the Compass - - -	1302	Edward II. -	1307
	Hundred Years' War between		Edward III. -	1327
	France and England - - -	1337	Richard II. -	1377
	•			
1400			Henry IV. -	1399
			Henry V. -	1413
	Wars of the Roses.		Henry VI. -	1422
			Edward IV. -	1461
	Invention of Printing - - -	1450	Edward V. }	1483
			Richard III. }	
	Voyage of Portuguese to the Cape		Henry VII. -	1485
	of Good Hope - - - -	1486	Henry VIII. -	1509
	Discovery of America by Colum-			
	bus - - - - -	1492		
1500				

MIDDLE AGES.

FRANCE.		GERMANY.		ITALY.		SPAIN.	
	A. D.		A. D.				A. D.
Philip the Fair -	1285	Rudolph of Hapsburg	1273	Gregory X.			
Louis X. - -	1314						
John & Philip V.	1316						
Charles the Fair	1321						
Phillip VI.- -	1328						
John II. - -	1351						
Charles the Wise	1364						
Charles VI. -	1380						
Charles VII. -	1422						
Louis XI. - -	1461						
Charles VIII. -	1483	Maximi- lian I. -	1493	Alexander VI.		Ferdinand & Isabella }	1476
Louis XII. -	1598						
Francis I. - -	1515					Charles I.	
							1516

THE END.

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